



PITTSBORO DOWNTOWN VISION PLAN

Prepared for The Town of Pittsboro, North Carolina

June 16, 2014

Acknowledgements

TOWN OF PITTSBORO:

Mayor - William G. Terry

Board of Commissioners:

Pamela Baldwin

Michael A. Fiocco

J.A. (Jay) Farrell

Bett Wilson Foley

Beth Turner

Town Manager - Bryan Gruesbeck

Planning Director - Stuart Bass

Town Engineer - Fred Royal, P.E., CFM

Parks Planner - Paul Horne

Pittsboro Business Association

PLANNING & DESIGN CONSULTANT:

Kimley-Horn

Sal Musarra, PLA - Project Manager / Master Planning

Gabe Hogan, PLA - Project Design / Graphic Design

Todd Ireland, P.E. - Cost Estimating

R. Michael Horn, P.E. - Transportation Planning

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Introduction

Background

On May 16 of 2014, the Town of Pittsboro hosted a meeting in their historic downtown with North Carolina Secretary of Transportation Tony Tata and staff to discuss opportunities and funding sources for implementing improvements in the downtown area. As a result of that meeting, Kimley-Horn was tasked with preparation of a Downtown Vision Plan that would address two key objectives:

1. Develop a high level, community-based vision for the downtown core as a starting point toward enhancing the aesthetics, functionality, and economic sustainability for a vibrant downtown.
2. Identify priority projects and implementation budgets to secure 2014 funding commitments from the State of North Carolina to implement selected projects.

The Town of Pittsboro, local business owners, and concerned citizens have over the years committed many resources to consider improvements to the downtown including development of a list of priority projects. The Town is also an active participant in the national Main Street Program. The Town Land Use and Pedestrian Transportation Plans deal very specifically with planned improvements to infrastructure and land use planning to enhance the downtown area.

Purpose of the Plan

This study should be viewed as the initial phase of a larger, more detailed Vision Plan for downtown Pittsboro. This effort included very limited, although very productive, stakeholder engagement and limited research or site investigations. Using this input, together with reference to prior studies and Town policy documents, this report attempts to capture the essence of the community goals for downtown and a long range view of downtown's place in the community and the region.

To restate the two primary objectives of the study, the intent is to offer a vision for the downtown core as a starting point toward enhancing the aesthetics, functionality, and economic sustainability for a vibrant downtown and secondly to identify priority projects and implementation estimates to secure 2014 funding commitments from the State of North Carolina to implement priority projects.

It is important for the community to understand that the concepts shown in the plan are attempts to illustrate broad objectives and subject to change based on many factors including funding, market conditions and land availability. While elements depicted in the plan may change, the underlying framework, implementation principles and action plan gives Pittsboro a sound guide for continued revitalization of its Downtown.



Approach and Process Summary

The project approach was to engage the local downtown business community in an intense, two day process to inform the planning study. The focus of initial efforts was to have a community-led discussion for an overall vision for downtown, irrespective of budgets, politics, property ownership, or other perceived barriers. The broad vision was then used as a jumping point to identify specific improvements that could help to achieve the broader vision.

The study area was generally defined by the limits depicted on *the Main Street Project Area Map* for the Pittsboro Main Street Program. The study makes note of some instances where conditions adjacent to, but beyond, the Main Street Project Area Map should be taken into consideration as impactful to the downtown vision.

Following is a brief overview of the process:

1. Conditions Assessment

The consultants spent two days on site walking the study area to identify existing conditions, photo document, take key dimensions, observe walking, parking and driving habits, and develop initial ideas for addressing specific site conditions, concerns, and opportunities. Local business leaders and representatives of the Town Staff participated as well.

2. Stakeholder Input

Local business owners were invited to walk in and engage with the planning process during the two days on site. Approximately one dozen individuals, including local citizens and elected officials, visited with the consultant team to offer ideas relative to issues and desired outcomes for downtown.

3. Visioning

Day two and three of the process included development of conceptual vision plans for the study area including broad land use concepts and detailed sketches to address challenging site design issues associated with unsafe, non-compliant code, or aesthetically undesirable site conditions. This time was also used to begin to formulate ideas regarding branding and placemaking for the downtown toward finding a community vision that speaks to the uniqueness of place that is Pittsboro.

4. Presentation of Initial Concepts

Two public presentations held in the Pittsboro Town Hall were conducted by the consultants during the two day planning process to review findings and concepts. On May 28 a stakeholder meeting was held to review the site conditions

assessment and discuss general vision concepts and desired outcomes for the community. On May 29 the consultant presented character sketches and a conceptual master plan for discussion. During this meeting there was discussion regarding prioritization of specific improvement projects based upon the Pittsboro Business Association list of projects previously developed.

5. Cost Estimating

Kimley-Horn processed the stakeholder input, existing conditions assessment, and conceptual master planning to formulate a spreadsheet for potential projects to further the Vision Plan goals. Estimates of cost to implement these improvements were developed using recent data from similar projects in the market and contingency funds. These estimates are very broad in scope and developed in the absence of detailed surveys or engineering plans but intended to serve as a budget development tool and for funding discussions with NCDOT.

6. Draft Report Production and Stakeholder Review

Kimley-Horn produced a draft report of all findings, concepts, and cost estimates for review by all parties. A progress version of the study was presented to a group of stakeholders and Town staff on June 13 2014.

7. Presentation To Board Of Commissioners

On June 16 2014 the draft study was presented to the Pittsboro Board of Commissioners.

Study Area Context and Issues Summary

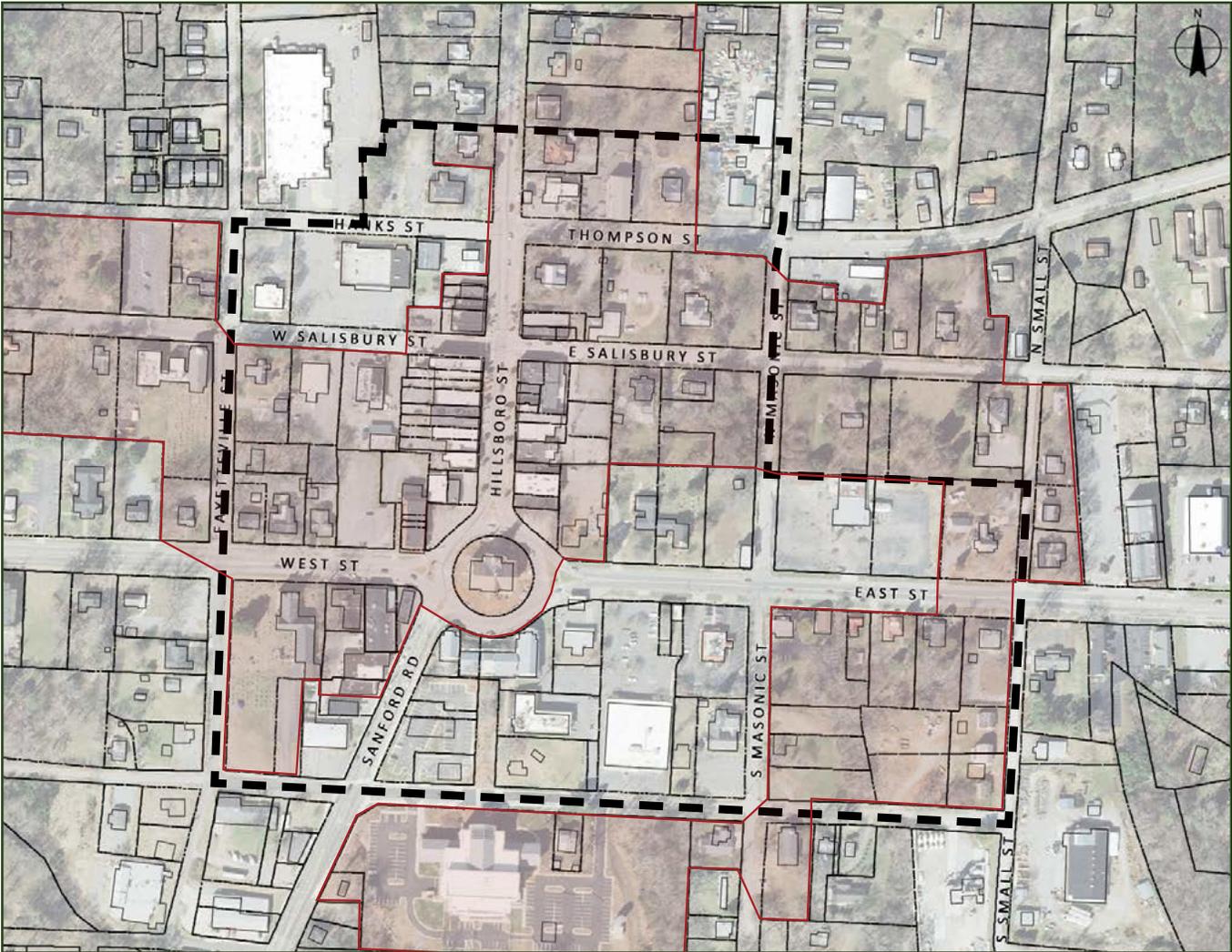
Study Area

The project study area was generally defined by the limits depicted on the *Main Street Project Area Map* for the Pittsboro Main Street Program. This study makes note of some instances where adjacent sites beyond the Main Street Project Area Map should be taken into consideration as impactful to the downtown vision. The area is generally defined by major streets including:

- North: Thompson St / Hanks St
- South: Chatham St
- East: Small St / Masonic
- West: Fayetteville St

This area is a logical starting point given the visual and physical connectivity to the core downtown near the Courthouse and the gateway arrival experience when entering the downtown area from all directions. The definition of downtown is typically more of a perception than a hard boundary and can be influenced by planning and design decisions to shape land use patterns, streetscape character, signage, and building massing. Paving materials, street trees, building setbacks, sidewalks, and wayfinding collectively help to distinguish the visual character and quality of the downtown and establish when you enter and leave this part of the community.

Portions of the study area fall within the Historic District per the National Register.



LEGEND	
	STUDY AREA BOUNDARY
	PARCEL BOUNDARY
	HISTORIC DISTRICT

Big Picture Trends

Downtown Pittsboro benefits from good architectural stock, the iconic Courthouse building, significant through traffic volume, some quality commercial tenants, and a unique culture that is a product of the natural environment of the area. Some of these defining characteristics are likewise challenges as well. A high volume of traffic, for example, can be good for retailers but also a problem if traffic congestions and parking become problematic.

National trends in demographics and population lifestyle preferences are very favorable to revitalization of small towns across the country. Pittsboro is poised to take advantage of these trends and must also plan to address the challenges associated with opportunities for growth within and beyond the downtown area. Several trends that are now, or may soon influence the character of the downtown include:

- A general move toward demand for downtown living on the part of both millennial and older adult populations
- Desire for live-work environments and minimal commute times
- Boom in single and childless / empty nester homes seeking smaller homes, urban infill, and mixed-use environments
- Desirability opt live in or near walkable communities
- Desire for more “authentic” shopping and entertainment experiences
- Demand for urban lifestyle, but with easy access to the natural environment
- Growth in intergenerational communities which integrates housing, employment, entertainment and services for all age groups

Relevant Studies / Active Plans

Pittsboro has been very active in planning exercises, studies, and policy making to support its downtown vision. Several documents were reviewed as background for this effort include:

- Town of Pittsboro Land Use Plan
- Town of Pittsboro Pedestrian Transportation Plan
- Town of Pittsboro Main Street Program
- Town Engineering Projects (West Street Rain Garden; West side wetland BMP)

Site Conditions Assessment

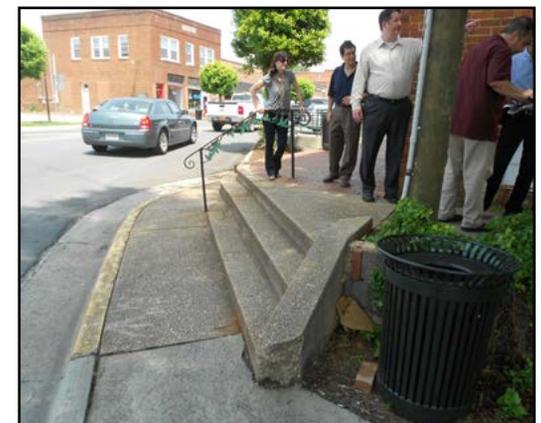
Land Use

Existing land uses in the study area are primarily a mix of commercial, civic, government uses with some vacant and residential properties. The Land Use Plan designates much of the study area as *Mixed Use Town Center*, excepting the government complex. This approach would support the vision plan to encourage a mix of uses with more emphasis on development form that enhances the downtown than the specific use.



Destinations and Barriers

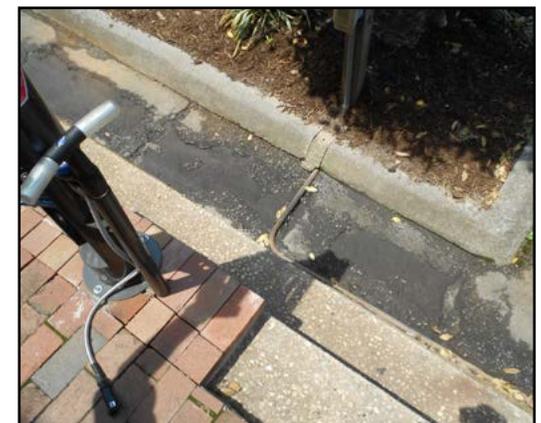
- Courthouse - the historic Courthouse, now the home of the Chatham County Historic Museum, is an iconic landmark image for the Town. Unfortunately, the position of prominence for this destination also requires pedestrians to cross the wide expanse or paving at the traffic circle. Crosswalk conditions should be a priority improvement.
- Government Complex – the daytime population base is focused in this area. The large parking demands require space but could also serve as shared parking for evening and weekend hours. Pedestrian connectivity to shops and restaurants should be improved to encourage pedestrian traffic to core commercial area.
- Hillsborough Street Commercial - the downtown core should grow as a destination as the community grows. The most significant barriers are poor sidewalk conditions, poor accessibility for the mobility challenged, dangerous crossing conditions, and lack of high value parking.
- Sidewalks - Narrow, cluttered, or gaps in sidewalk connectivity are issues and physical conditions throughout downtown are generally very poor. Brick walks along Hillsboro are uneven and have cross slopes well in excess of today's standards' for accessibility. Utilities and light standards interrupt pedestrian flow in some areas and awkward step transitions between walks and parking are inconvenient, take up sidewalk width, and are a liability condition in many places.
- Wide street sections – excessive paving creates several barriers to good downtown livability. First, pedestrian crossings are more challenging due to the crossing distances, especially to the mobility impaired. Secondly, it represents additional impervious area that could otherwise be put to landscape helping to minimize heat gain and stormwater runoff. Finally, the wide roads encourage higher rates of speed on downtown streets.
- Lack of safe, modern crosswalks – most intersections within the study area are either lacking crosswalks or have substandard crosswalks by today's standards. New striping, signage, pedestrian count-down heads, ramps and bulb-outs would improve safety significantly at key intersections.
- Lack of ADA Accessibility – Good accessibility downtown is a product of many design elements including ramps, handrails, proper cross slopes, modern crosswalks, and properly located handicap parking. Downtown currently has many barriers to good mobility related to all of these elements in many areas. Concrete curb/steps and steep cross slopes are examples of many challenges that need to be addressed.
- Parking - on street parking is heavily used downtown. The parking deficit, or perceived deficit, is related to lack of public surface lots behind commercial destinations. There are several private lots that might offer shared parking potential should land owners be open to accommodating public use during off hours.



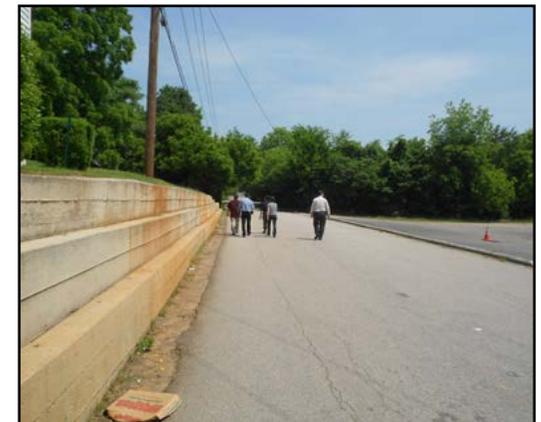
Physical Site Conditions

The consultant team spent significant time on site over several days to observe site conditions and user habits when interacting with streets and sidewalks within the study area. Following is a summary of key conditions that are generally applicable to much of the study area. In addition, to these common conditions, there are many specific site details throughout downtown that require remedial work to address aesthetic, functional or public safety issues.

- Sidewalks: Poor paving condition – brick sidewalks are uneven and in some cases bricks are rising off of the base due to normal settlement and potential localized failures in the base material creating gaps in pavement and trip hazards.
- Sidewalks: Excessive slopes – many areas exhibit cross slopes approaching eight percent which is well beyond the two percent guidelines for ADA accessibility. Slopes of this magnitude can be problematic for the elderly or physically disabled and dangerous to the general population when wet or icy.
- Sidewalks: lack of connectivity – there are significant gaps in the pedestrian path system where no sidewalks existing along side streets and in the vicinity of the traffic circle. Where they do exist on side streets, they are often very narrow and in poor condition. Navigating by foot around the traffic circle is complicated by large expanses of asphalt parking areas with no defined walking paths.
- Sidewalks: Grade differentials between walks and parking - both sides of Hillsboro Street have conditions where concrete steps are required to address the grade changes from parking surface to the sidewalks. These steps do not generally meet codes for tread – riser relationships making them unsafe to negotiate. They are visually obtrusive, and create a safety issue where cars could potentially roll over curbs into the pedestrian realm.
- Street Sections: in general, there appears to be excessive pavement widths for travel lanes on East Street and around the traffic circle. This encourages faster rates of speed in areas that you typically want to calm traffic and creates more overall impervious area. These conditions could be an opportunity to introduce landscape islands or more on-street parking.
- Electrical conduits are exposed above ground along curb lines on Hillsboro Street
- Street Trees – evergreen Hollies are the predominant tree along Hillsboro Street located in small islands between parking spaces. A larger deciduous canopy tree species would provide more aesthetic and environmental benefit to the streetscape environment.
- Handicap Ramps – ramp conditions at crosswalks and within sidewalks are not installed or where they do exist, may not be ADA code compliant. The ramp feature at the northeast corner of the traffic circle is actually not accessible when a vehicle is parked in the adjacent handicap space.



- Parking: unsafe conditions – parking spaces at the corners of the traffic circle are problematic due to the lack of defined driveways, insufficient area for safe turning movements, and unsafe entry and exit conditions relative to the travel path in the traffic circle. These conditions would not be acceptable in any new development and should be addressed as a long term issue for the safety and aesthetics of the Courthouse area.
- Parking: underutilized lots – large private parking areas appear to be underutilized and occupy valuable downtown real estate. They are visually detrimental to the downtown aesthetic and may offer good opportunities for shared parking facilities
- Above Ground Utilities – Visual clutter downtown is significant as a result of overhead power lines and utility poles located in pedestrian zones.
- Drainage – storm drainage along Hillsboro Street and within the sidewalk zones needs to be assessed to address ponding at storefronts in several areas. Side streets with no curb and gutter and ditch sections can be addressed as part of streetscape improvements. Two stormwater feature projects are being planned by the Town including a rain garden at the NW traffic circle corner and a wetland BMP on the west side near the bakery.
- Wayfinding – the lack of a unified and comprehensive signage system has a visual impact and makes downtown more difficult to navigate for visitors. NCDOT traffic signs around the traffic circle, while necessary, are visually obtrusive and should be an item for discussion with NCDOT for alternatives solutions.
- Landscaping – the lack of a unified planting scheme for street trees impacts the visual quality of the downtown. There are many significant specimen trees on private property that add to the character of the area but a more regular pattern of tree plantings along across streets would greatly enhance the aesthetics of downtown.
- Crosswalks – several key intersections are lacking any pavement striping or pedestrian signage and those that do have them need to be updated for safer crossing conditions. Pedestrian signal heads are needed at signalized intersections.
- Lighting – there is an established pattern of decorative light standards on Hillsboro, around the Courthouse, but a more modern style of lighting is used around the new County Justice Center complex.
- Multi-modal paths - there is a general lack of facilities for multi-modal means of transportation within the study area. Bike lanes and greenway paths exist in some parts of town but connectivity through the downtown is lacking.



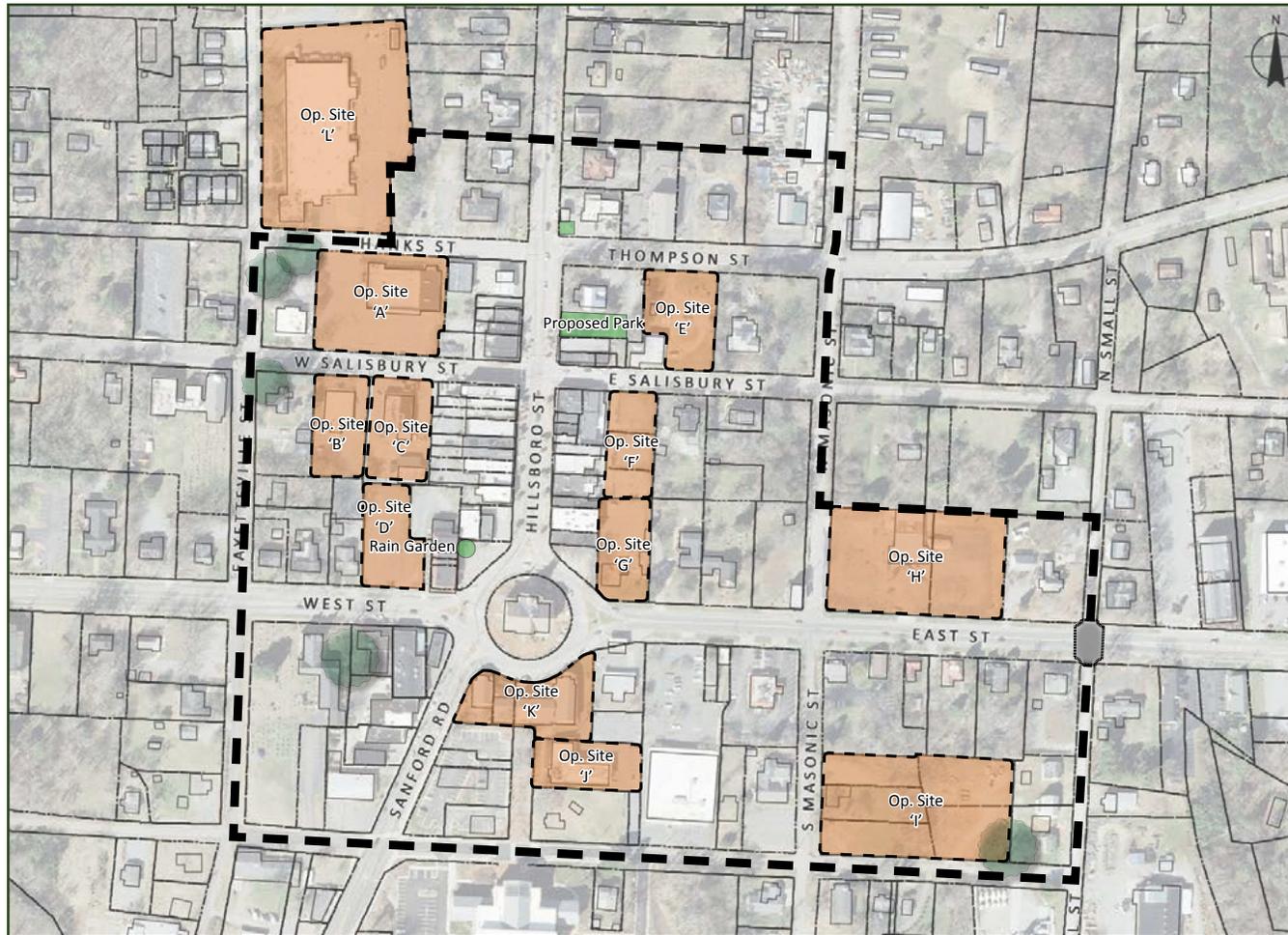
Challenges And Opportunities

Opportunity Sites

Opportunity sites are those properties, developed or undeveloped, that may offer some long term value to the downtown as new development, redevelopment, or re-purposed sites. This value may be tied to its size, location, existing structure, connectivity, or some combination of those factors but in general are deemed underutilized given these qualities. It is key to note that opportunity sites do not necessarily represent sites that are on the market, or have owners, sellers or developers communicating a desire or willingness to consider change at this time. The value in identification of these sites is to acknowledge the key positions they occupy in the overall master plan in the hopes that should they become available or should the Town or private sector be motivated accordingly, this master plan might help steer development in a direction consistent with the vision.

Opportunity sites within the study area include:

- large, private surface lots (*shared parking; structured parking; open space*)
- the old post office on Hanks St. (*re-purpose opportunity*)
- the abandoned auto dealership on East St. (*redevelopment site*)
- the County offices on Chatham St and East St (*open space; shared parking; redevelopment*)
- undeveloped site on Chatham St (*redevelopment site*)
- the vacant manufacturing site on Credle



OPPORTUNITY SITES LEGEND

ID	LOCATION	AC	OWNER	DESCRIPTION	POTENTIAL LAND USE
A	50 W SALISBURY	1.27	JUSTICE LAND LMTD	VACANT - FORMER RETAIL SITE	PARKING; MUNICIPAL CENTER; MED. DENSITY RESIDENTIAL
B	75 W SALISBURY	0.53	RUNNING DOG HLDGS	FORMER POST OFFICE	PROFESSIONAL OFFICE, CULTURAL CENTER; ART GALLERY; RESTAURANT
C	49 W SALISBURY	0.64	RUNNING DOG HLDGS	UNDERUTILIZED - GRAVEL PARKING	OPEN SPACE; SURFACE OR STRUCTURED PARKING; REFUSE CENTER
D	WEST ST	0.53	JUSTICE MOTOR CO LLC	UNDERUTILIZED - GRAVEL PARKING	OPEN SPACE; SURFACE OR STRUCTURED PARKING
E	37 E SALISBURY	0.70	SPRINT CAROLINA TEL	UNDERUTILIZED - PARKING	
F1	56 E SALISBURY	0.19	HARRIS FAM. & WD HARRIS	UNDERUTILIZED - PRIVATE PARKING	SHARED PARKING; LINEAR GREEN SPACE
F2	HILLSBORO ST	0.17	SPILLER JESSE T	UNDERUTILIZED - PRIVATE PARKING	SHARED PARKING; LINEAR GREEN SPACE
F3	56 E SALISBURY	0.24	HARRIS FAM. & WD HARRIS	UNDERUTILIZED - PRIVATE PARKING	SHARED PARKING; LINEAR GREEN SPACE
G	55 EAST ST	0.51	PITTSB. PRESBYTERIAN CH	UNPAVED PARKING	PEN SPACE; PARKING; PEDESTRIAN CORRIDOR
H1	165 EAST ST	1.02	GENERATION II CAROLINA LLC	VACANT - FORMER AUTO SALES	OPEN SPACE; PARKING; COMMERCIAL; MIXED USE
H2	165 EAST ST	0.74	GENERATION II CAROLINA LLC	VACANT - FORMER AUTO SALES	OPEN SPACE; PARKING; COMMERCIAL; MIXED USE
I	CHATHAM ST	0.37	MT SINAI AME CH TRUSTEES	VACANT	PARKING; MUNICIPAL CENTER; MED. DENSITY RESIDENTIAL
I	59 MASONIC ST	0.34	SPILLER JESSE T	VACANT	PARKING; MUNICIPAL CENTER; MED. DENSITY RESIDENTIAL
I	MASONIC ST	0.29	SPILLER JESSE T	VACANT	PARKING; MUNICIPAL CENTER; MED. DENSITY RESIDENTIAL
I	CHATHAM ST	0.81	MAPLE LEAF CONSTRUCTION	VACANT	PARKING; MUNICIPAL CENTER; MED. DENSITY RESIDENTIAL
J	65 E CHATHAM ST	0.56	CHATHAM COUNTY	COUNTY - POTENTIAL RELOCATION	PARKING; MUNICIPAL CENTER; MED. DENSITY RESIDENTIAL
K	12 EAST ST	0.56	CHATHAM COUNTY	COUNTY OFFICES	OPEN SPACE - OPEN VIEWS TO COURTHOUSE
L	158 CREDELE ST	2.76	MILHOLEN PROPERTIES	VACANT	MIX USE RESIDENTIAL/ CIVIC / CULTURAL
		12.23	TOTAL ACRES		

Parking

Challenge: The lack of quality public parking behind commercial stores and businesses is an inconvenience and can be a deterrent for visitors. Free on-street parking leads to low turnover use of those spaces. In addition, employees taking advantage of prime on-street parking for extended hours can further deplete the available inventory for customers and visitors. Downtown planning studies have demonstrated that a strategy to make the most desired, on-street parking expensive will improve turnover and push people to use ancillary parking facilities.

Underutilized private parking lots occupy valuable real estate in close proximity to businesses but are not available to the public. This is a challenge that may also present some opportunities. In addition, three quadrants of the traffic circle have potentially unsafe parking conditions relative to turning movements in and out of the travel lanes.

Opportunities:

- improve efficiency of layout on existing surface lots to gain spaces;
- foster shared use agreements and reservation systems on private surface lots for public use
- develop structured parking when economically feasible behind commercial businesses east and west of Hillsboro St or within the County government complex; incorporate retail façade into decks where possible
- meter on-street parking to encourage high turnover at storefronts
- develop shared parking lots in County complex

Community Open Space

Challenge: A well-known planner once said “every project needs an ocean”. The amount of public open space within the study area is very low as compared to similar historic downtown neighborhoods across the region or country. The lack of a significant downtown gathering space for programmed events or informal recreation is a critical gap in the arsenal of Pittsboro’s downtown amenities.

Opportunities:

- Develop a centrally located park, ¾ to 1 acre or more in size, suitable for programmed public events and daily, informal use
- Consider a long term view toward a park on the site of the existing County offices south of the Courthouse. This site would reestablish a sight line to the Courthouse from Chatham Street and be a visual enhancement to the town center.
- Evaluate underutilized parking lots or vacant properties as potential near-term solutions for open space

East-West Connectivity

Challenge: limited opportunities between blocks for connectivity to parking or open space.

These connections become more important if you are successful finding opportunities to develop infill parking and new open space.

Opportunity: utilize existing alleys between buildings or create voids where possible to achieve connectivity. These connections must be well lighted and are great places for artwork or intimate landscapes.

Street Frontage Gaps

Challenge: Gaps between uses along key streets disrupt the downtown visual rhythm and make the town less walkable.

Opportunity: encourage urban infill projects and ensure that development codes support development forms that can help accomplish this.

Sidewalk Slopes And Drainage

Challenge: existing sidewalks along Hillsboro Street are uneven, have severe cross slopes, and step transitions to make up grade differential between walks and parking surfaces. These conditions do not meet current ADA accessibility guidelines.

Opportunities:

- Brick sidewalks should be replaced, re-graded, and incorporated with retaining rails, railings and landscaping where necessary to address grade differentials.
- New or modified drainage systems can be installed as part of sidewalk renovations to address ponding water in front of businesses

Intersection Enhancements

Challenge: several key intersections are without any crosswalk features and those that have features do not meet current standards for safe pedestrian movement across public streets. In addition to being an issue of safety, renovation of intersections can also enhance the overall aesthetics of the downtown streetscape

Opportunities:

- Improve all intersections to include new striping, ramps, bulb-outs and pedestrian signal heads where appropriate
- Incorporate special pavement into key gateway intersections; include public art and landscaping opportunities

Street Sections

Challenge: Several significant streets appear oversized resulting in higher rates for speed and additional impervious area within the downtowns area. This is particularly evident along East Street and around the traffic circle.

Opportunities:

Using the Complete Streets model as a guide, all downtown street sections should be evaluated to minimize paved surfaces which in turn will provide other benefits such as:

- Traffic calming effects to reduce rates of speed
- Increased area for landscaping
- Room for bike lanes and wide sidewalks

On-street parking serves many beneficial roles in the downtown environment. It provides critical convenient, high-turnover parking for customers. It also provides physical protection from the travel lanes to the pedestrian zone and is an important definer of space for a comfortable sidewalk realm. On-street parking also is a key component of traffic calming. The more constricted drivers feel the slower they will drive.

Parking configurations can vary along Hillsboro Street to include parallel or angle parking solutions with inherent advantages and disadvantages for each approach. Parallel parking is typically less appealing to shoppers and visitors and reduces the overall parking quantity along the curb. The turning movements can be more problematic during times of congestion. However, the smaller dimensional requirements from curb to travel lanes provides more room for the sidewalk environment, drainage solutions and landscaping. By contrast, angle parking requires more depth but yields more spaces per linear foot of curb.

Multi-Modal Transportation Systems

Challenge: connectivity between downtown destinations is critical, as well as connectivity to the broader community. Currently, poor sidewalk conditions, poor adherence to accessibility standards, and gaps in connectivity inhibit mobility within and beyond downtown. These connections should accommodate all means of travel inducing pedestrian, bike, and transit.

Opportunities: modify street sections to incorporate bike lanes and transit stops. Create multi-modal paths between blocks and establish connection nodes to the broader Town greenway system and, in the future, to Chatham Park.

Technology

Challenge: combine the desirability of authenticity of place with technology features sought by all age groups today.

Opportunities: Streetscape implementation projects offer a great opportunity to incorporate conduit and duct banks to accommodate delivery systems for communications cable and systems for WIFI connectivity throughout downtown. A ‘wired’ town is convenient and a great tag line for marketing. Small business owners will be more attracted to a plug-n-play town that accommodates their needs for fast and broad connectivity for employees and customers. Smart parking technologies, LED lighting, vehicle charging stations, solar shade structures, and electronic kiosks are examples of other potential technology features to

consider.

Housing Opportunities

Challenge: Increasing downtown residential population to support local business, encourage new businesses, and bring evening and weekend vitality to the downtown. Encourage intergenerational housing.

Opportunities: There are several large opportunity sites and small infill opportunities within the study area that might be candidates for in-town residential living. The large opportunity sites include the Mt Sinai site on Chatham east of Masonic and the former manufacturing site at Credle and Hanks.

Gateways

Challenge: there is a lack of definition of the downtown area resulting from a deficit and no unified approach to materials, wayfinding, landscaping, and street standards.

Opportunities: giving downtown a special identity includes good definition of gateway entry points denoting this special district. The perceived limits of downtown will vary depending upon an individual’s perspective but the Town can make intentional moves that more clearly denote where those limits are. The installation of the 911 monument near the County Justice Center is one indication of the Town’s commitment to this principle.

Many elements must work together to accomplish this including some of the following:

- Pavement patterns at gateway intersections
- Unified design standards for street furnishings and lighting
- A unified palette for street tree and ornamental landscaping
- Public art
- Buried overhead utilities
- Unified design standards for sidewalks
- Unified wayfinding
- Building facade programs

Parcel Assembly

Challenge: Like most downtowns of this size, there are many property owners, forms of ownership and property configurations that make assembly of land for significant public spaces or redevelopment challenging. The distribution of owners, renters, and vacant parcels can also inhibit these efforts.

Opportunities: the presence of large tract opportunity sites may be an advantage in Pittsboro. In addition, there are options to relocate existing businesses to nearby parcels better suited for their success and for the goals of the Vision Plan to clear the way for recombining parcels for key projects. Access agreements across parcel lines and shared parking agreements between owners are also tools that can help advance the vision relative to parking needs and access to open space.

The Vision Plan - A Downtown Vision For The Future

Pittsboro is a community at a crossroads – figuratively and geographically speaking. The historic downtown is facing the pressures common to many towns of similar size and context but is now looking to a future influenced by the Chatham Park development, changing demographics, and changing local and regional traffic patterns. Pittsboro has some fundamental advantages to build from in the downtown given its authentic character of the historic architecture in the old Courthouse and Hillsboro Street facades and a culture of environmental awareness, farm-to-table cuisine, and arts and crafts. The downtown business community is very engaged in planning for the future and elected officials are active guardians of the small town character while understanding that improvements must be made to achieve destination status while protecting those qualities found most endearing to the residents.

Our downtowns are simply the purest form of mixed use communities with many elements that must work together to support a livable town center. These elements are physical, visual, emotional, and economic. Successful downtowns have a uniqueness to them that is part organic and part intentional. Sometimes the brand is derived from good fortune and natural amenities (lakes, rivers, mountains) and sometimes it is a brand cultivated carefully to sell an image or theme (music; history). During stakeholder meetings we shared ideas about what images or qualities came to mind when thinking of Downtown Pittsboro:

‘Adjectives’ to describe Pittsboro’s “brand”

- Local
- Historic
- Eclectic
- Vibrant
- Density
- Green

There clearly is a desire to have downtown become a destination address. Downtowns are successful in this manner when they achieve a critical mass and mix of activities that can draw residents and visitors alike on a daily basis for a variety of activities, both short and long term in duration. Convenience and impulse destinations will draw from short distances with proximity to downtown.

Drawing people from beyond the area requires the right mix of goods and services

that warrant the effort to drive or take a trolley or a long bike ride to downtown and typically for more than one activity. A good multi-modal system is vital to allow those people to walk or bike or take the bus to downtown for daily goods and services. While one great restaurant might be worth the trip, a great dinner coupled with a movie and a free outdoor concert will be much more successful to attract repeat visitors. The ultimate benchmark for success may be that point when people routinely decide to simply go downtown with no agenda, confident that there will be enough activity to make the trip worthwhile based upon experience or word of mouth.

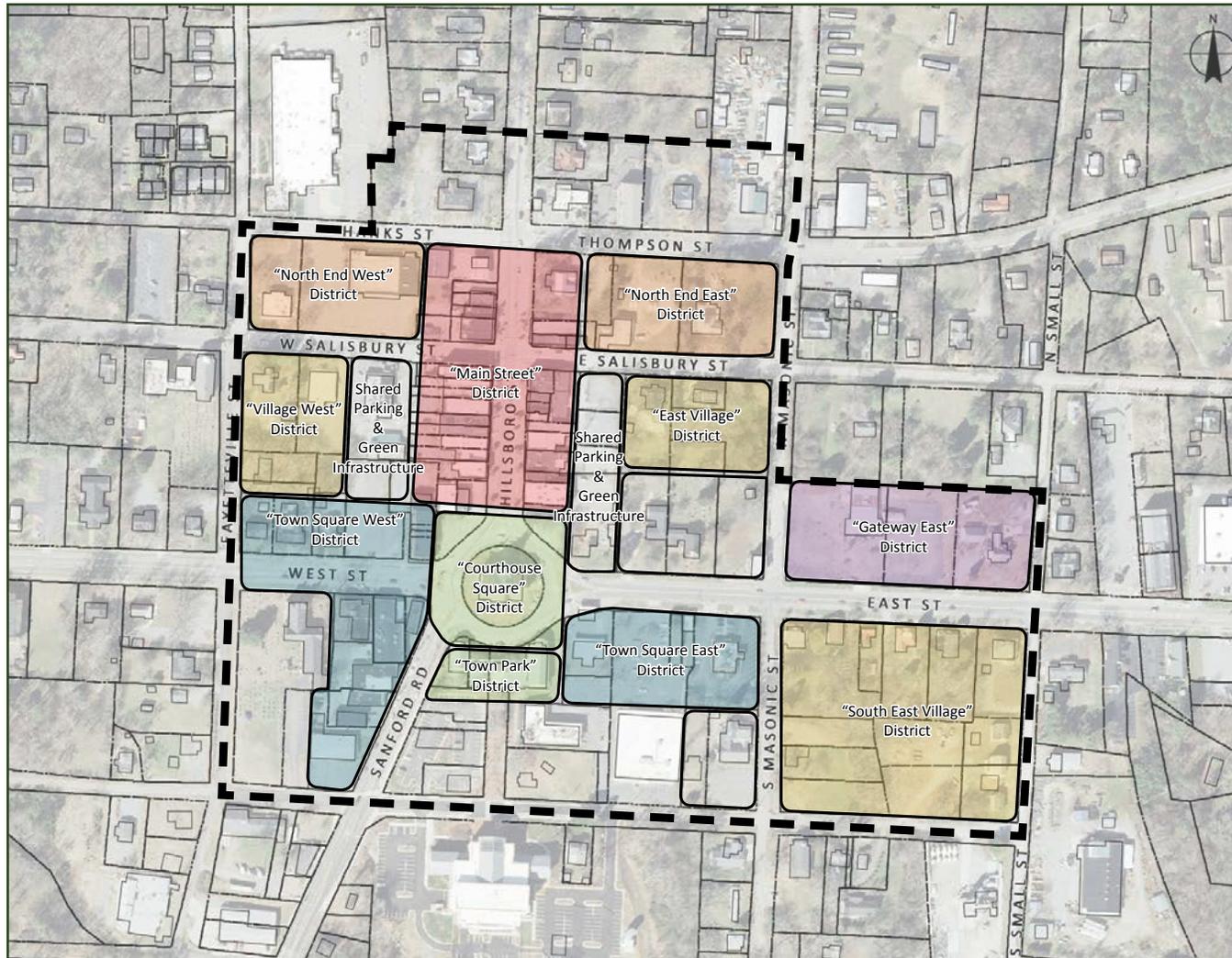
The task of establishing the brand and character for downtown is made easier when the community already has certain qualities embedded in its community DNA. Stakeholders suggested that some of this character for Pittsboro could be described as follows:

- Artistic
- Night Life
- Organic
- A Community

Branding a community can be an intentional exercise. It takes a real coming together of community, political will and willingness to compromise. The stated vision for downtown as crafted by the Pittsboro Business Association speaks to these realities and reads as follows:

To develop a downtown district that will help promote our shops, recruit new business and offer an attractive and inviting center of commerce for not only the local community, but for the surrounding communities as well. This vision is intended to develop Pittsboro’s downtown district as a vibrant destination location that maintains Pittsboro’s historic charm and highlights our community’s commitments to the local cultural arts, the environment, and other ties to the surrounding agricultural community. We hope to grow a town center that centralizes our government offices, bringing more people into the shopping area, houses a cultural arts center and outdoor park and amphitheater that will invite many from inside and outside the county to come enjoy our local arts and music, and offers attractive spaces for people to recreate, relax and stay awhile.

This statement embodies the aspiration that people will come to downtown to experience the local flavor and culture. If we consider for a moment that all downtowns have certain elements in common: parking, sidewalks, signs, benches, etc., then what makes them unique and tells you what is different about each community? How space is defined, how materials are used on buildings and



LEGEND	
	STUDY AREA BOUNDARY
	PARCEL BOUNDARY
	BOUNDARY DISTRICT

CONCEPTUAL DISTRICT MAP

hardscape, and how authentic the place feels all work together to your downtown unique. The downtown brand of Pittsboro must be brought forward and be consistently applied to future improvements in such a way that visitors immediately understand your community when they enter by car, bike or walk around on foot. Asheville NC is one community that has successfully accomplished that in their downtown with a brand built around art and counter-culture. Nearby Apex, NC has done so as well with a more subtle brand as a family oriented downtown. In order to establish your brand in an authentic manner, you should strive to intentionally incorporate your brand into all elements of your downtown.

For example, a vision for Pittsboro that embodies the essence of your town might include elements that reinforce the environmental, agricultural roots and farm-to-table mentality of the community. This perspective might lead to intentional efforts to incorporate more community gardens into public spaces, promote more local farm-to-table restaurants, expand farmer's markets, edible and sustainable landscapes. Downtown festivals organized around those themes can help reinforce them.

Districts and Identity - Another means of branding and creating identity within a downtown is to encourage synergistic growth within loosely defined districts. This is more prominent in larger urban areas but can already exist to some extent in small downtowns simply by virtue of similar businesses locating near each other. In many towns you might actually find districts formalized on maps or simply used in local speak. Commonly found district

identities include: Museum; Arts; Theatre; Restaurant; Financial; Park; Riverfront; Warehouse. Some districts get tagged with geographic names that give an indication of where they are located: West End; East Village; Uptown. Districts can give sense of size and complexity to a town and also encourage similar uses to congregate in an area to create a destination. In addition, districts provide a form of wayfinding whereby people use an established locale to meet or begin their journey.

Pittsboro certainly has one established district identity in the County government complex. Hillsboro Street would also denote a known destination to locals. Over time, additional districts may evolve but planning efforts might consider trends and market opportunities to create a district brand if market conditions support that opportunity. The Town's culture of music, farm-to-table, and local art are examples of businesses or event venues that could cluster to create destinations.

Sound, enforceable development codes are a significant part of guiding quality downtown development that is consistent with your vision plan. A downtown overlay district and design guidelines are useful tools to that end and require significant time and effort on the part of staff, elected officials and stakeholders to properly develop. Form based, or hybrid codes can be good options for downtown areas as they focus more on the physical form of development than specific uses which is especially useful to encourage infill development.

Finally, the importance of aggressive marketing and programming of downtown events cannot be overstated. It is not about size as much as it is about quality and frequency. Getting the public accustomed to coming downtown on a regular basis to be with other people is the key. Of course, this implies that you also develop the spaces, venues and parking to accommodate those crowds and provide an overall positive experience. That means the park space is as important as restrooms, parking, and, traffic control. During summer months, the City of Raleigh has programmed events on their "main street" virtually every weekend and a few nights a week where ten years ago there was none. People know they can go downtown without fear of finding nothing to do. Start small, but execute well and maintain quality in the way you provide entertainment and support services and growth in popularity will follow.

Conceptual Master Plan

The final development of the Downtown can take many shapes and forms but there are some fundamental principles that can be committed to and applied through planning efforts to realize the overall downtown vision.

Build Complete Streets

- Reduce pavement widths around Courthouse traffic circle; add sidewalks and landscaping
- Reduce pavement widths on East St and enhance streetscape
- Landscape splitter islands at traffic circle
- Enhance crosswalks at all intersections
- Add Bike lanes
- Plan for future transit stops

Improve Quality and Quantity of Parking

- Re-stripe for on-street parking where possible
- Evaluate angle versus parallel options for each condition
- Engage property owners with private surface lots to develop shared parking solutions
- Engage the County to develop shared parking solutions on County government complex
- Evaluate large parking lot or structured parking east of Hillsboro

Enhance Streetscapes

- Re-work entire Hillsboro Street public realm from Courthouse to north of Thompson / Hanks: address paving, utilities, drainage, grade differential; relocate signal poles out of sidewalks;
- Address ADA accessibility: modify steep slopes; modify or add handicap ramps and handrails;
- Enhance side streets with sidewalks and street trees; and bury overhead utilities
- Encourage infill development to fill in the gaps along street frontages and reinforce the downtown façade
- Establish street tree program – all streets, including details for urban tree planters
- Enhance intersections with safe crosswalks, bump-outs and pedestrian signals where appropriate
- Bury overhead utilities wherever streetscape work is implemented
- Develop design standards for paving materials, lighting, and site furniture

Create a Significant Downtown Open Space

- Create plazas at NE and NW corners; remove parking to eliminate unsafe turning movements; consider public art opportunities
- Create linear green connections between blocks
- Create a significant town park on an opportunity site with good pedestrian connectivity to businesses and parking
- Create pocket parks where possible with good connectivity

Integrate and Promote Public Art

- Create opportunities for public art in key improvement projects, especially at gateways, alleys, and pocket parks

Define Gateways

- Enhance intersections at key arrival points entering the downtown:
- South at Chatham
- East at Small
- Hanks at 15-501
- Fayetteville at West
- Provide for significant public art installations
- Incorporate wayfinding standards

Improve Connectivity

- Create east-west connections through large blocks and alleys wherever possible - connect streets, parking, and open space
- Create ally connections through building masses east-west
- Create north-south green infrastructure mid-block



CONCEPTUAL MASTER PLAN LEGEND

- STUDY AREA BOUNDARY
- EXISTING COMMERCIAL
- INFILL DEVELOPMENT
- RESIDENTIAL
- GOVERNMENT / INSTITUTE
- PUBLIC SPACE / URBAN PARK
- GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE / PED PATH
- PARKING
- STREETScape IMPROVEMENTS
- PEDESTRIAN NODES / GATEWAY FEATURE
- INTERSECTION IMPROVEMENTS



The Action Plan

The second primary objective of this study was to identify priority projects and associated budgets for the Town's use in planning and pursuit of funding sources. With the master plan as a guide, the consultant team, Town staff, and community stakeholders developed a list of projects that would have the most impact toward improving the function, safety and aesthetics of Pittsboro's downtown.

Many of the proposed projects dovetail with previous or active efforts to advance projects identified in the Town *Pedestrian Transportation Plan*. Some of those projects are located outside, or extend beyond the study area limits but are important in their contribution to the entire network of paths and streets serving the community.

During initial stakeholders meetings, community participants used a list of priorities previously developed by the Pittsboro Business Association to indicate which improvements the community felt were most critical to the success of downtown.

Priority Projects: Pittsboro Business Association - Rankings of relative Importance (1 to 3)

- 1 Gateways starting with Complete street improvements of 15/501 from Chatham Mills through Powell Place from 64 bypass to downtown
- 1 Safe/attractive crosswalks
- 1 Sidewalk improvements and beautification (landscape / public art)
- 2 Parking
- 1 ADA accessibility / compliance
- 2 Wayfinding
- 1 Power lines buried in C-4
- 1 Replace utility mounted street lighting with decorative lighting poles
- 2 Garbage recycling center C-4
- 2 Facade improvement worth preservation of historic character
- 3 Building renovation (interior)
- 2 Addition / improvement of parks
- 2 Infill development (business/commercial)
- 3 Green roofs
- 3 Residential above retail
- 2 Other road improvements
- 1 Easy/safe bicycle / greenway access from population centers to downtown (i.e. Powell Place; Chatham Forest; Chatham Park)

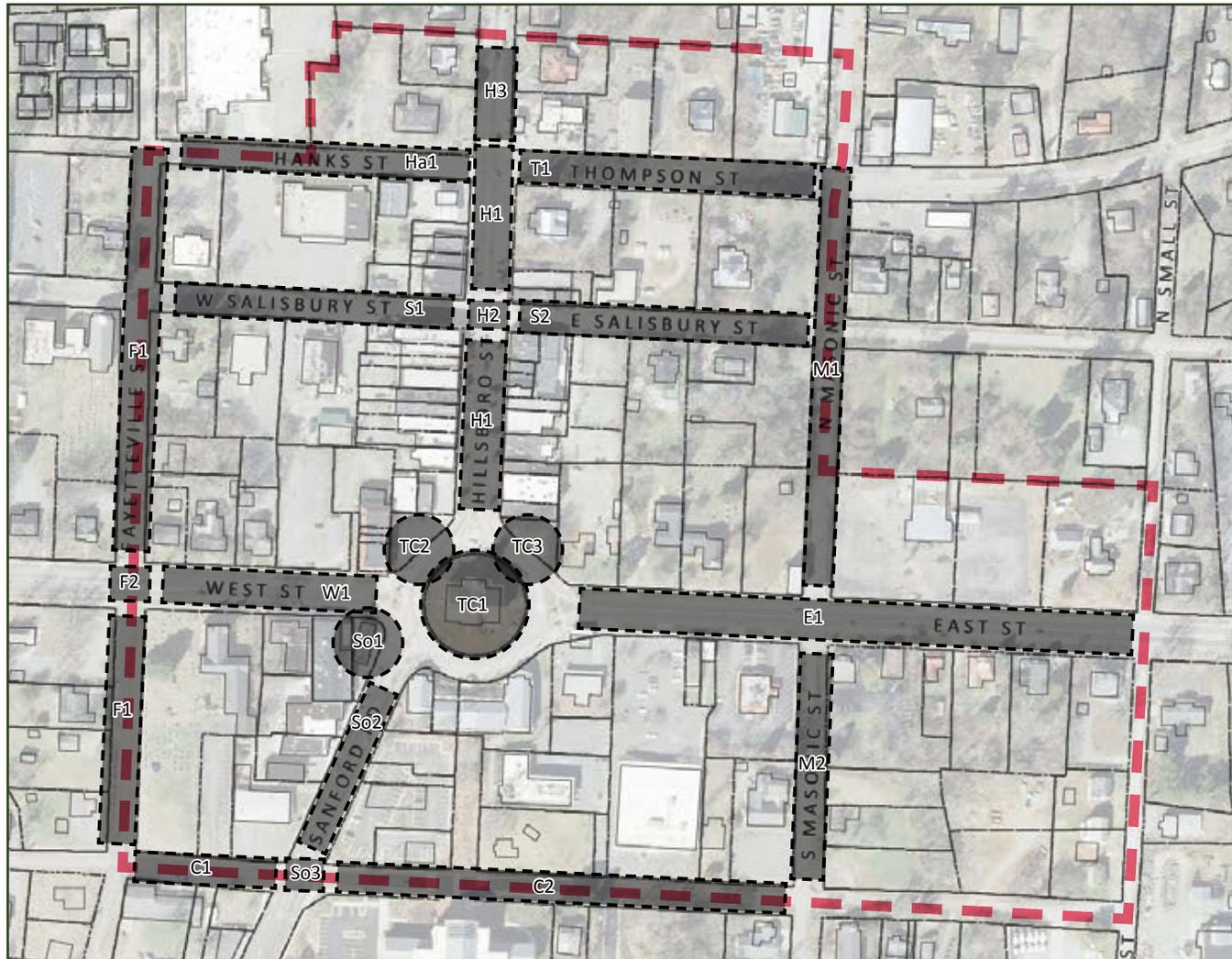
Prioritization of projects was further refined with additional stakeholder input and based upon the findings of this study with emphasis on those projects that met the NCDOT criteria for eligibility for immediate discretionary funding. The ratings reflect those improvements that would have the biggest, immediate impacts to the quality of the downtown environment.

Budget Estimates

Budget estimates for the priority project list were developed to establish a very high level order of magnitude cost for implementing selected projects. A summary of costs is provided within this document and represents total estimated values for construction using knowledge derived from a combination of recent market data for similar work and NCDOT pricing guidelines for public projects. A detailed back-up for each project was developed with estimates for the major line items of work typically associated with each project. The summary of estimates within this document represent rolled up values derived from those detailed estimates. The primary component of the budget estimates include the following:

- Estimate of total construction cost per project
- Breakdown of estimates for each project into costs for basic construction and the burial of overhead utilities
- A 15% contingency applied to construction costs
- Soft costs typically associated with design and site investigations such as surveys and geotechnical reports

A lump sum line item for design of a comprehensive wayfinding package is also included.



PRIORITY PROJECT KEY MAP

It should be noted that these estimates are not based upon design plans, field surveys, or engineering calculations and are intended only to serve as a planning tool for future efforts to allocate or seek funding. Detailed site surveys, utility locating services, geotechnical services, and engineering plans will be required to develop more accurate estimates of cost.

The cost summary indicates a potential budget of approximately 15 million dollars to accomplish all of the identified projects in today's market. Of that total, roughly 3 million dollars could be expended to put utilities underground.

The top seven priority projects represent approximately 5 million in potential costs to implement.

Implementation Strategies

A. SOLICIT DESIGN for CONSTRUCTION PLANS

The process toward implementation of priority projects will require a collaboration of the Town, NCDOT and the business community. Some of the key action items may include:

1. Securing funding sources from NCDOT
2. Assessing supplemental funding sources
3. Public RFQ process and selection of design firms for design and engineering of priority projects
4. Validation of costs and scope of projects; expand or reduce scope of work accordingly
5. Site surveys and investigations for use in design
6. Bidding and construction

It is particularly critical with streetscape construction projects to effectively communicate to the community the impacts, schedule, and general nature of construction activities. This type of construction covers large areas, creates traffic challenges, demands multiple shifts in work limits, and will disrupt individual businesses for some period of time. These projects can be very stressful, emotionally and economically on business owners so it is vital to provide the most complete information possible regarding schedules and activities.

B. COMPLETE THE VISION PLAN

This report represents an introduction to key issues specific to Pittsboro's downtown and some general principles regarding development of successful downtowns. This study should be augmented with additional detail and public input to further develop specific action items, goals and objectives for the Vision Plan. The types of information that could be address include:

- Additional public input and a refined vision statement
- Guidelines and approaches for code development and design standards
- Detailed street typologies
- Demographic and market analysis summaries
- A Phased action plan
- Additional support graphics and conceptual plans

C. DEVELOP CODE AND DESIGN GUIDELINES

Sound, enforceable development codes are a significant part of guiding downtown development that is consistent with your vision plan. The Town

should embark on a process to develop a downtown overlay district and design guidelines to guide future growth and development in downtown. Form based or hybrid codes should be considered as they focus more on the physical form of development than specific uses which is especially critical for infill development. Downtown zoning should provide for a variety of housing products and price points to attract a broad demographic, including older adults. A mix of small lot homes, townhomes, same-lot accessory units and vertical live-work units should be a part of a vibrant downtown.

Continued participation in the *Main Street Program* will also help to ensure protection of character and quality in the existing building stock.

D. DEVELOP A WAYFINDING PROGRAM

Design and implement a Downtown signage and wayfinding program in conjunction with streetscape improvements to enhance visibility and improve the visitor experience.

E. DEVELOP A TOWN PARK

The development of a town gathering space to hold large and frequent public events is crucial to creating excitement and downtown as a destination. There are several keys to success related to this endeavor:

1. **Begin the Process.** Explore options for venues and be open to potential short term solution over a permanent one. In order to advance your goals for downtown it may be best to establish a short term event venue in lieu of waiting for the perfect long term site to become available. Perhaps a site that can double as parking when not in use or an abandoned or long time vacant property could serve this purpose.
2. **Focus on the quality, of the total user experience, not the size of the event.** Total experience means quality entertainment, good food, adequate and convenient parking, good traffic control, good restroom facilities, a safe environment, and friendly assistance.
3. **Program. Program. Program.** Frequency is vital in order to establish a pattern of participation, high expectations, and anticipation among the community. Small, quality events on a regular basis will help people become accustomed to coming downtown and foster habits whereby downtown becomes the default destination for local residents and visitors, with confidence that there will always be something to do or see downtown.

PITTSBORO DOWNTOWN VISION PLAN - PRIORITY PROJECT SUMMARY

June 16, 2014

ID	Priority	ESTIM. COST	LOCATION	DESCRIPTION OF WORK	NOTES
So1	1	\$ 201,000.00	SW Corner of Traffic Circle	New Curb, Landscape, Sidewalk	Reduce Impervious
TC1	1	\$ 1,042,000.00	Traffic Circle	Reduce Pavement Section to 24'; Landscape; New Sidewalks; New Crosswalks; New Splitter Islands	Improve Pedestrian Safety; Traffic Calming
TC2	1	\$ 213,000.00	NW Corner of Traffic Circle	Landscape; Narrow Access; Resurface	Improve Pedestrian Safety; Traffic Calming
TC3	1	\$ 228,000.00	NE Corner of Traffic Circle	Landscape; Narrow Access; Resurface	Improve Pedestrian Safety; Traffic Calming
H1	1	\$ 2,328,000.00	Hillsboro St: Traffic Circle to Hanks St	Replace Sidewalk; Re-grade Cross Slope; Site Walls; Drainage Modifications; New Trees; Lighting	Reduce Travel Lane Dimensions;
H2	1	\$ 552,000.00	Hillsboro St at Salisbury St Intersection	Modify HC Ramp; New HC Ramp at Curb	full intersection improvements
Ha2	1	\$ 474,000.00	Hanks St at Hillsboro St Intersection	Crosswalks, Overhead Underground	full intersection improvements; gateway
So3	2	\$ 466,000.00	Chatham St at South St Intersection	Gateway Paving; Crosswalks	Special Pavers - Gateway Landscape
E1	2	\$ 1,337,000.00	East St: Traffic Circle to Small St	Parallel Parking - South Side; Bulb-outs; New Sidewalk; Street Trees; Lighting	
So2	2	\$ 633,000.00	South St: Chatham St to Traffic Circle	New Curb, Landscape, Sidewalk, Overhead Underground	Realign at Traffic Circle
W1	2	\$ 748,000.00	West: Fayetteville St to Traffic Circle	South Side: New Curb, Sidewalk, Landscape, North Side: Trees; Parking Striping; OHP Underground	Street Lighting and Bulb-outs
H3	2	\$ 306,541.00	Hillsboro St north of Thompson / Hanks	New Curb, Landscape, Sidewalk	
S1	2	\$ 706,000.00	Salisbury St: Fayetteville St to Hillsboro St	New Curb, Sidewalk, Landscape, Lighting, Overhead Underground; Wall at North Side Slope	Curb, Walk and Slope to Grade North Side
C1	3	\$ 332,000.00	Chatham St: Fayetteville St to South St	New Curb, Sidewalk, Landscape, Lighting, Overhead Underground	North Side Only
C2	3	\$ 440,000.00	Chatham St: South St to Masonic St	New Curb, Sidewalk, Landscape, Lighting, Overhead Underground	Match Justice Center Sidewalk
M1	3	\$ 584,000.00	Masonic St: Thompson St to East St	11' Lane Width; New Curb; Sidewalk; Landscape; Overhead Underground	Sidewalk both Sides
M2	3	\$ 369,000.00	Masonic St: Chatham St to East St	New Sidewalk; New Crosswalks; Landscape; Overhead Underground	West Side
F1	3	\$ 493,000.00	Fayetteville St: Chatham St to Hanks St	New Curb, Sidewalk, Landscape, Lighting	
F2	3	\$ 352,000.00	Fayetteville St at West St Intersection	Crosswalks and Bulb-outs; Landscape	
Ha1	3	\$ 535,000.00	Hanks St: Fayetteville St to Hillsboro St	Sidewalk South Side; Parallel Parking, Overhead Underground	
T1	3	\$ 723,000.00	Thompson St: Hillsboro St to Masonic St	North Side: New curb, Sidewalk, Landscape, Lighting, Overhead Underground; Crosswalks	
S2	3	\$ 507,000.00	Salisbury St: Hillsboro St to Masonic St	Crosswalks; Sidewalk South Side	
		\$ 13,569,541.00	Subtotal Construction		
		\$ 1,356,954.10	10% Soft Costs (Design / Site Testing)		
		\$ 75,000.00	Wayfinding Design Manual (construction NIC)		
		\$ 15,001,495.10	GRAND TOTAL		
		\$ 2,937,000.00	Bury Overhead Utilities		
		\$ 10,159,000.00	Streetscape Improvements		

Exhibits

Vision Plan Exhibits

- Stakeholder Engagement Notes
- Conceptual Improvement Plans and Details
 1. Town Center Concept
 2. Northwest Corner at Traffic Circle
 3. Northeast Corner at Traffic Circle
 4. West Side Parking Concept
 5. West Side Park Concept
 6. Salisbury St. Opportunity Site Concept
 7. East Side Park Concept
 8. Typical Street Section
 9. Typical Intersection Improvements
 10. Hillsboro St. Street Tree Retrofit
 11. Hillsboro Streetscape Grade Transitions Conditions A-D
 12. Salisbury Streetscape Grade Transition
 13. Hanks St. East of Hillsboro St.

Reference Plans

- Main Street Project Area Map
- Land Use Plan-Downtown Existing Land Use
- Land Use Plan-Future Land Use
- Public Parking
- Historic District
- Pedestrian Transportation Plan-Recommended Facilities



PITTSBORO DOWNTOWN VISION PLAN

Vision Plan Exhibits

Stakeholder Meeting #1 Meeting Minutes

5/28/2014

o Team to have conversation with DOT verify if the downtown master plan must be approved and adopted before DOT will officially review.

o The most 'iconic' building in town would be the courthouse and could be considered the town's 'ocean' if traffic can be calmed or diverted around the space so that it can be used as a public space.

'Adjectives' to describe Pittsboro's future

- Local
- Historic
- Eclectic
- Vibrant
- Density
- Green

'Strengths' of Pittsboro

- Artistic Community
- Night Life
- Traffic
- Organic Farms
- Community
- Town Board/Political Will

Challenges' facing Pittsboro

- Parking
- Traffic
- Tractor Trailer Volume
- Under Utilized Space
- Lack of People Living in Downtown
- Lack of a Previous Process
- County Cooperation

'Peer' Downtowns

- Apex, North Carolina
- Tavares, Florida
- Carrboro, North Carolina

Front Page Headline in the Future

- Pittsboro thriving along with Chatham Park

What will be our measure of success on this project?

- Becoming a destination location
- Known as family friendly

Strategies for working with the Chatham Park development

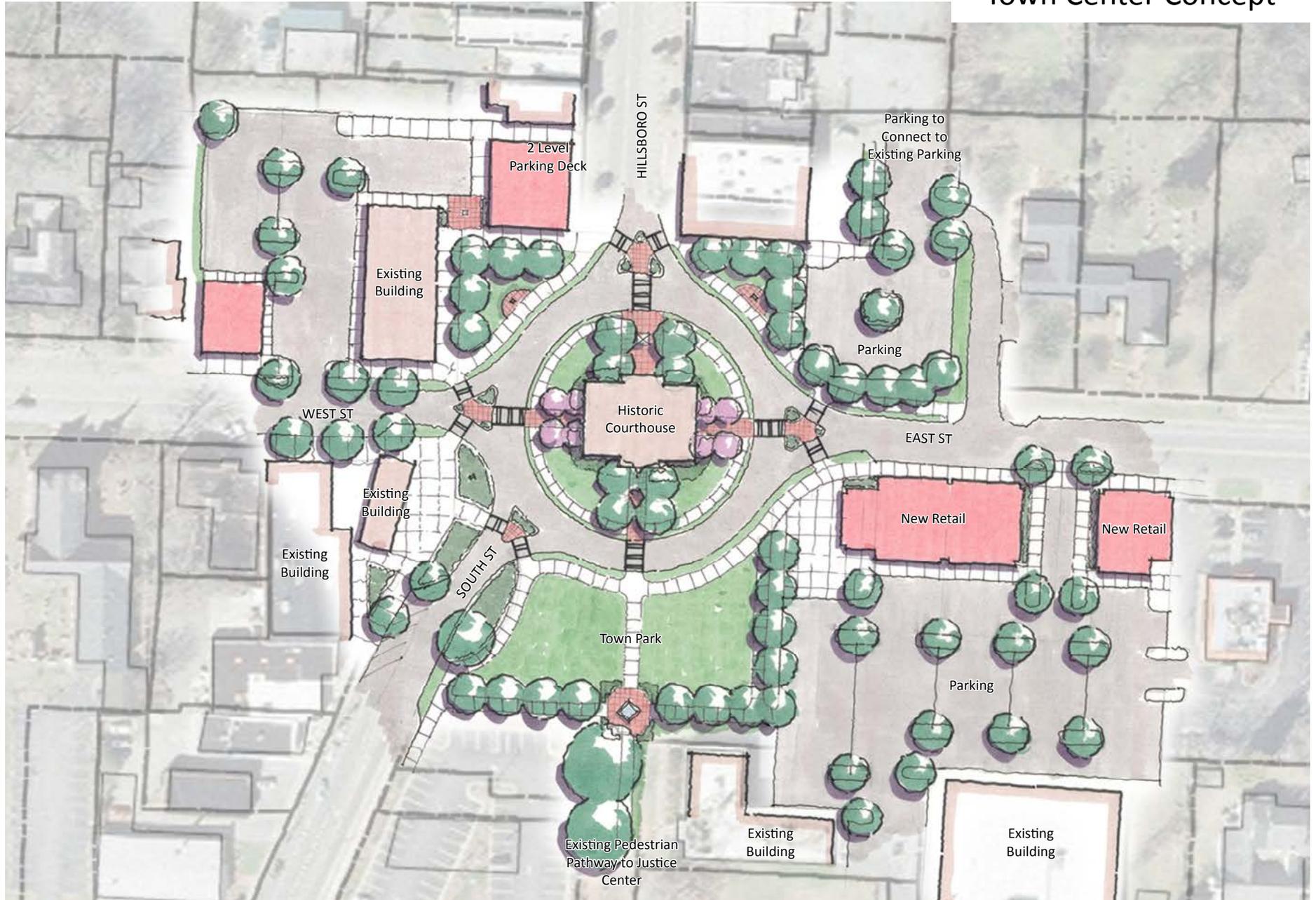
- Bring new residents into the downtown
- Facilitate transportation between downtown and Chatham Park
 - Bike/Trail
 - Multiple collector roads into downtown at critical lateral connections
- Highway 15/501 to be a complete street catering to vehicular, bike, and ped.
- Connections of greenways to downtown

Stakeholder Meeting #2 Meeting Minutes

5/29/2014

- Sal presented the previous meeting first then presented KHA's concepts and sketches to the group.
- Input was overall favorable except that the area allocated to the park was to be increased in area to allow for town festivals.
- There is a desire to extend retail and density down East St.
- There is an overall interest for structured parking to solve the town's limited parking.
- The group believes that the old town mill should be considered an opportunity site even though this is outside of the study area. Has the potential to become another gateway into the city.
- A special session will be held on June 16th for council to review the study and approve.

Town Center Concept



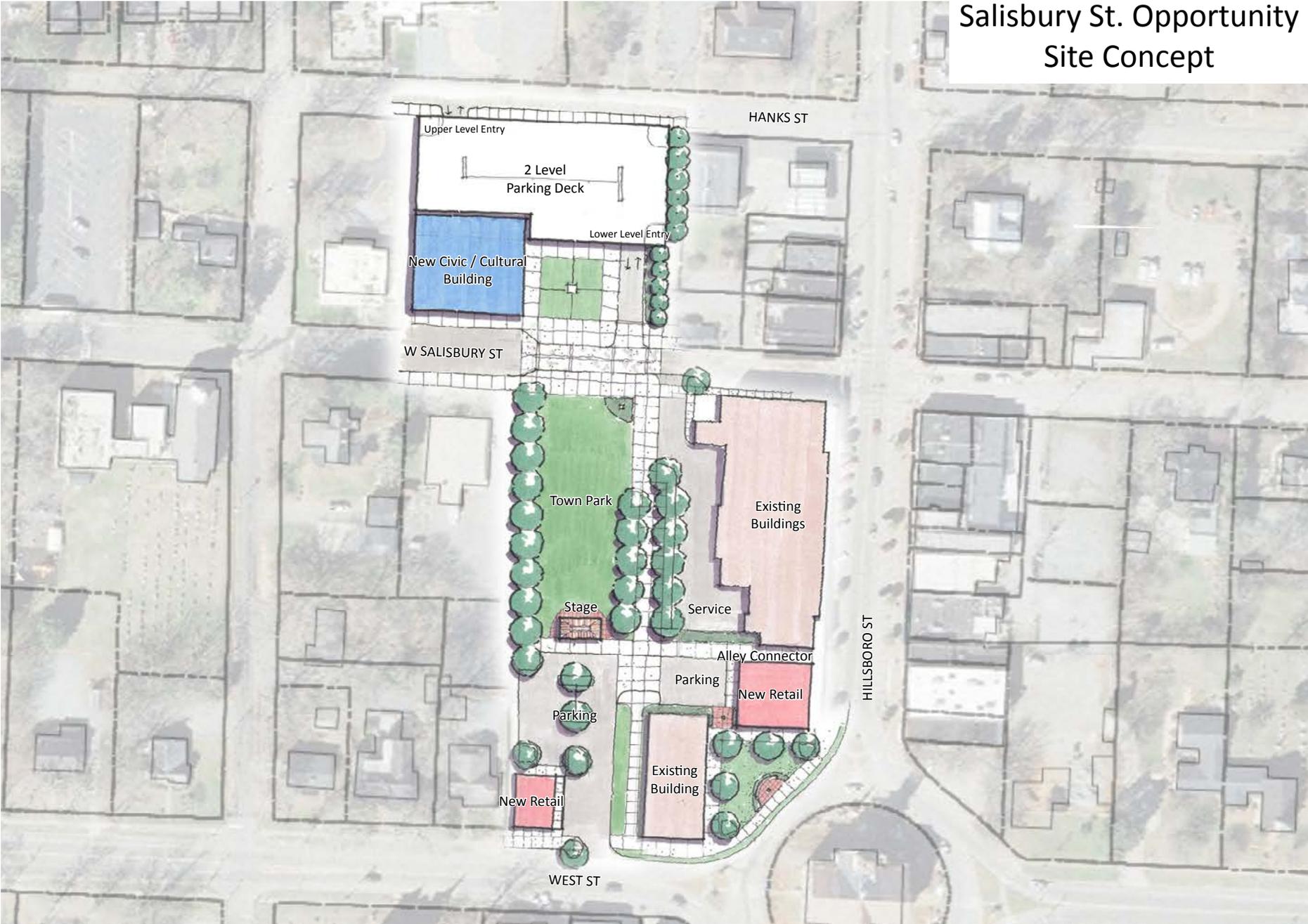
Northwest Corner Parking Concept



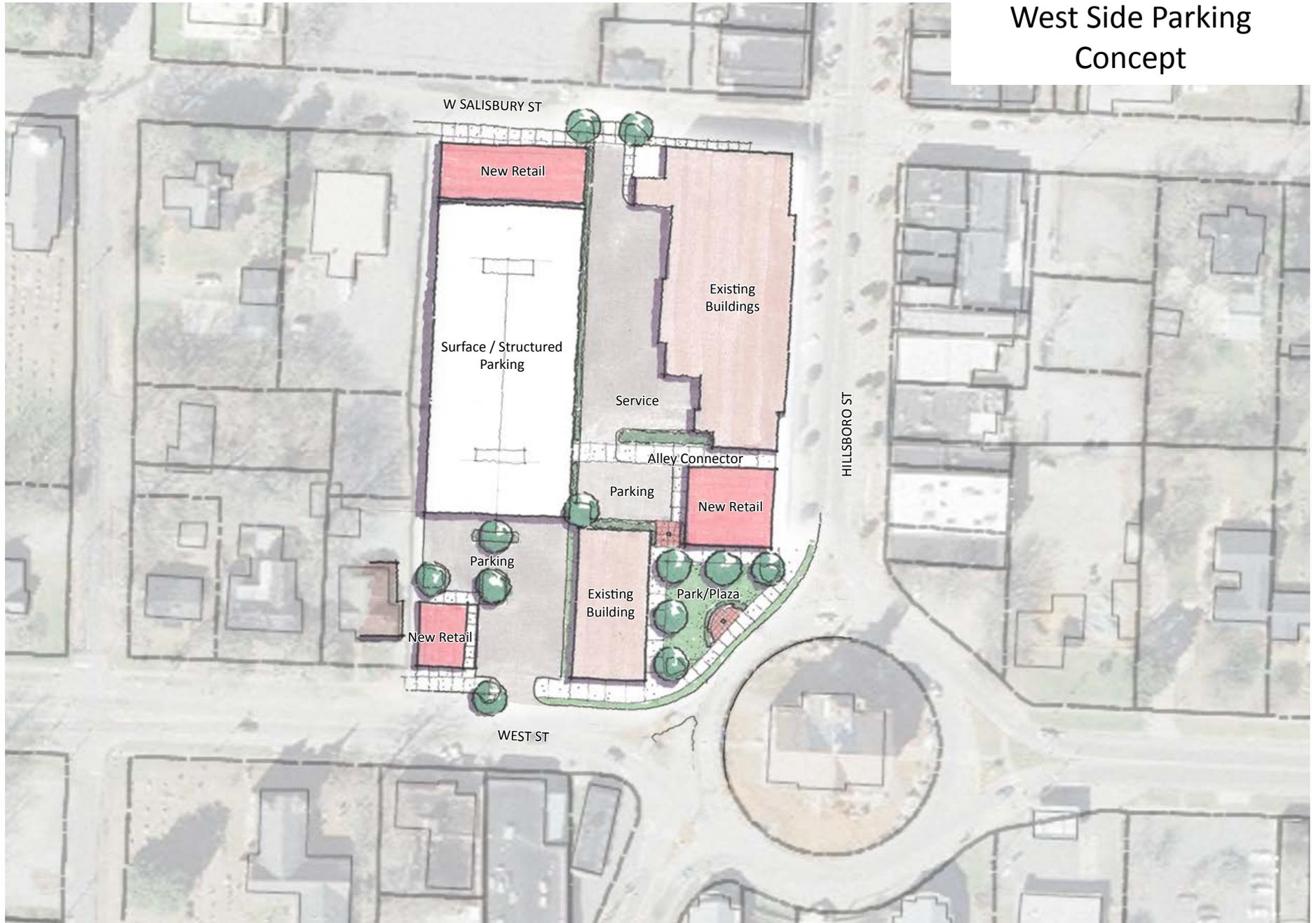
Northeast Corner at Traffic Circle Concept



Salisbury St. Opportunity Site Concept



West Side Parking Concept



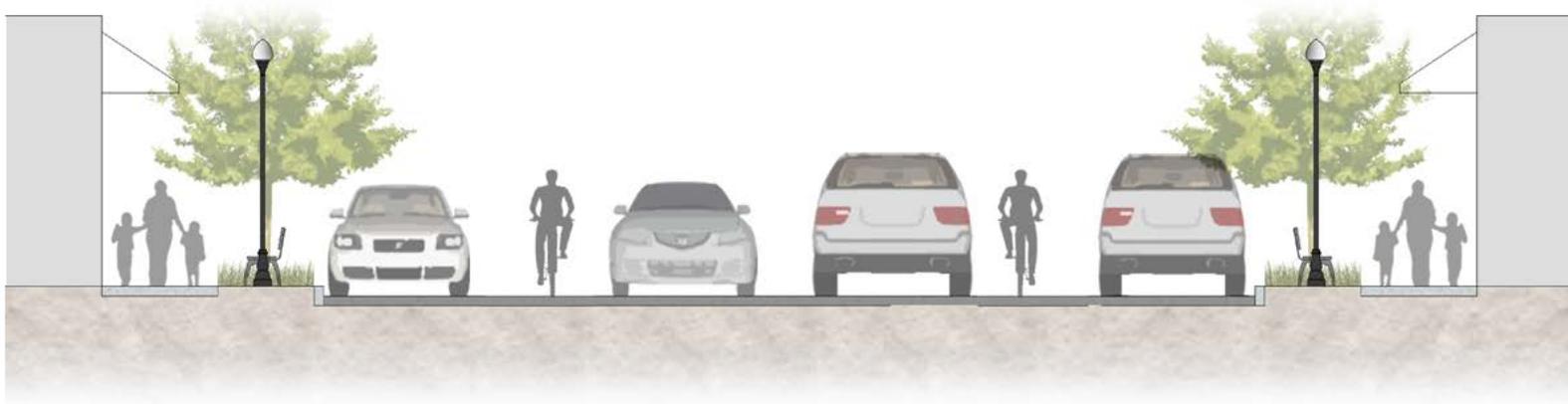
West Side Park Concept



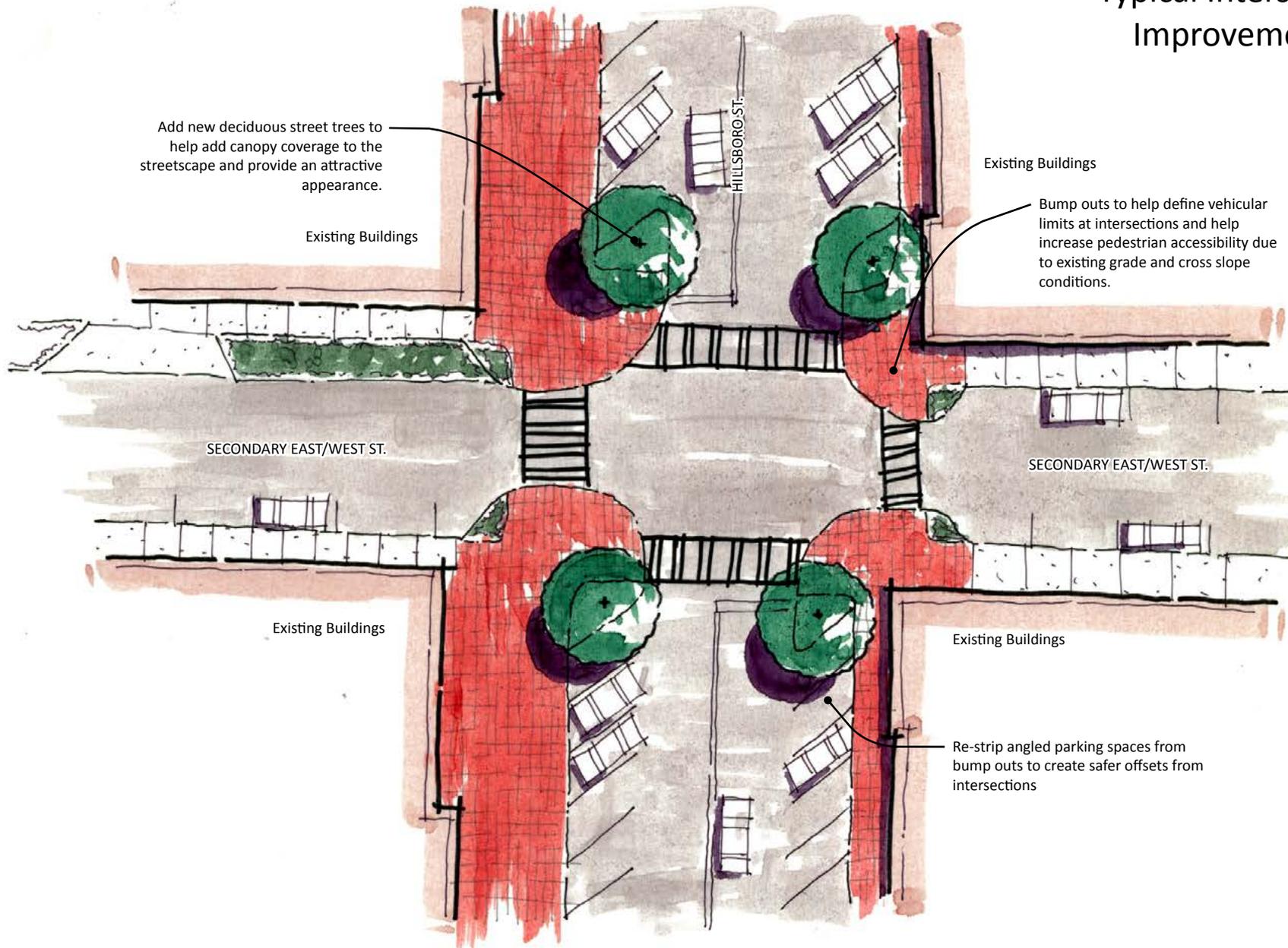
East Side Park Concept



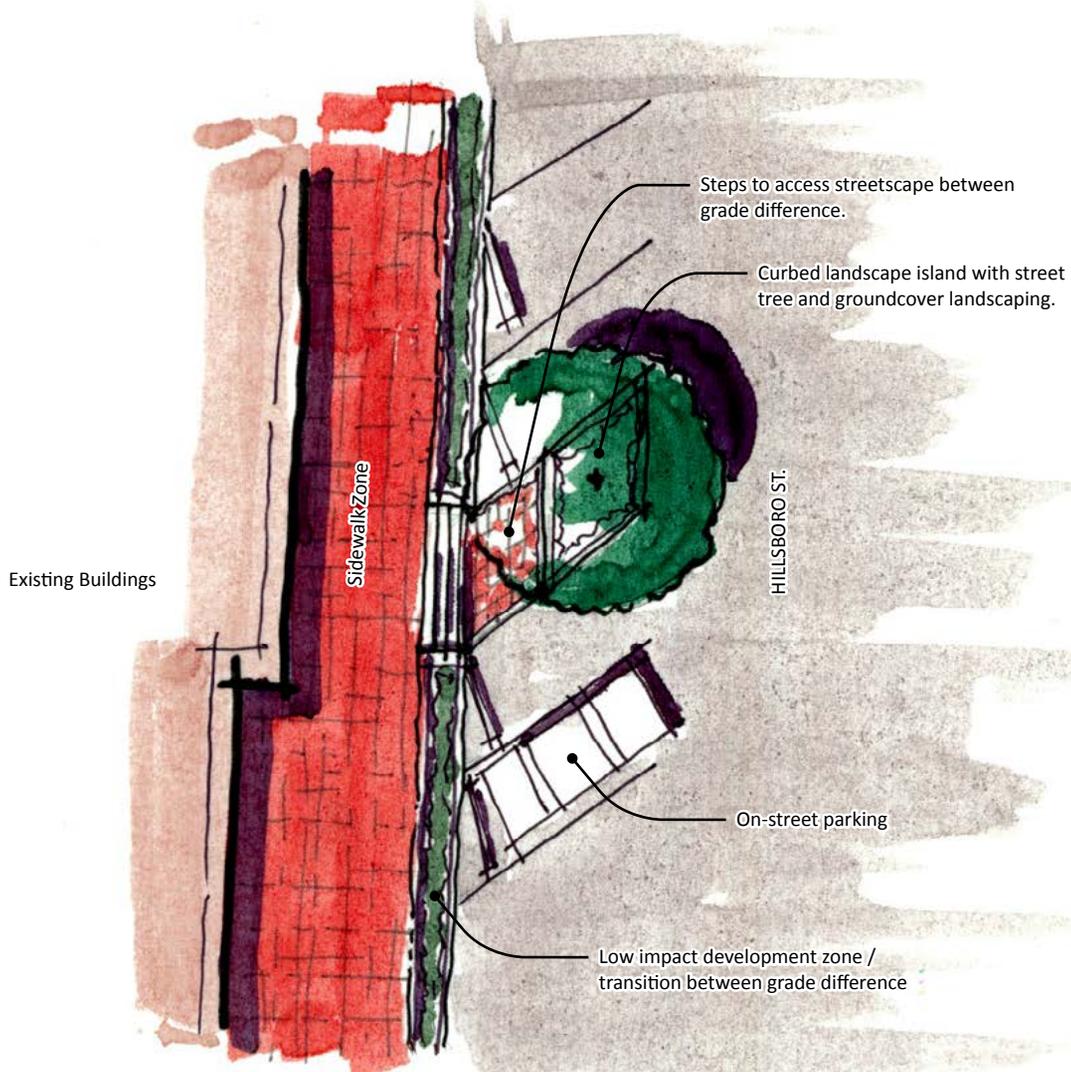
Typical Street Section



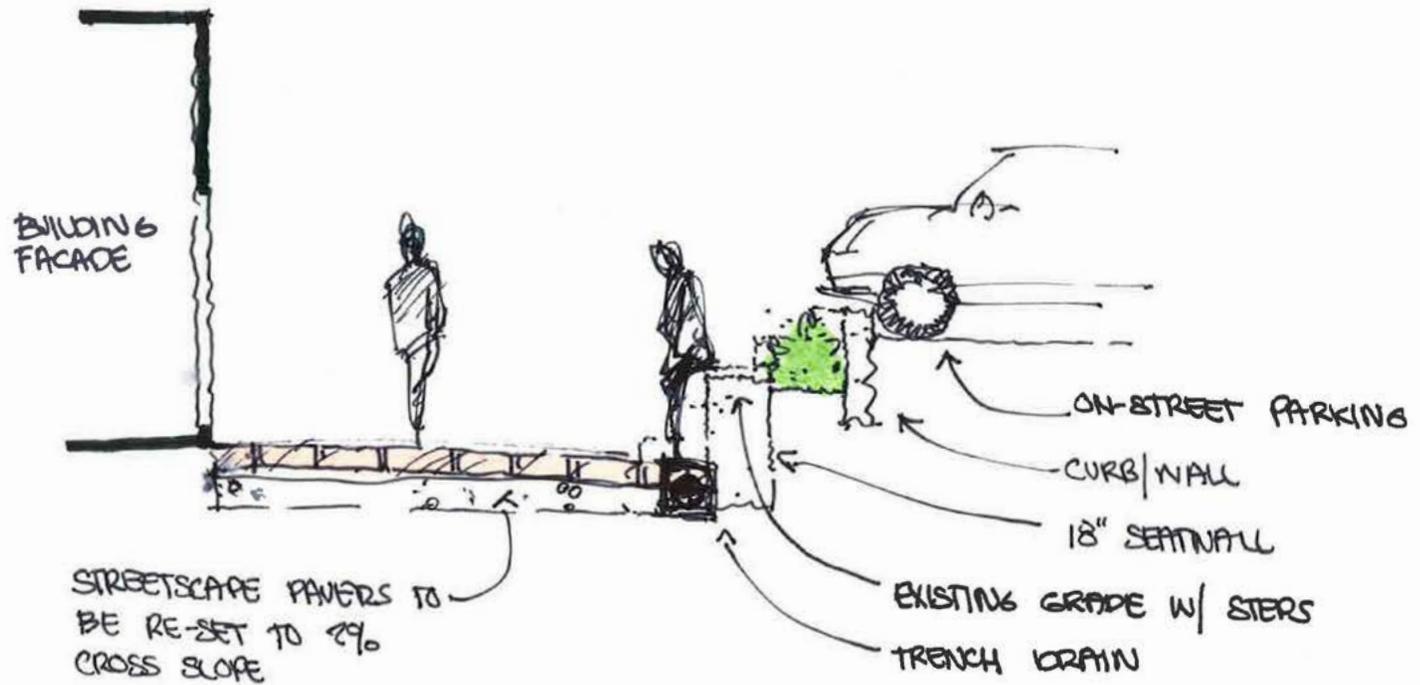
Typical Intersection Improvements



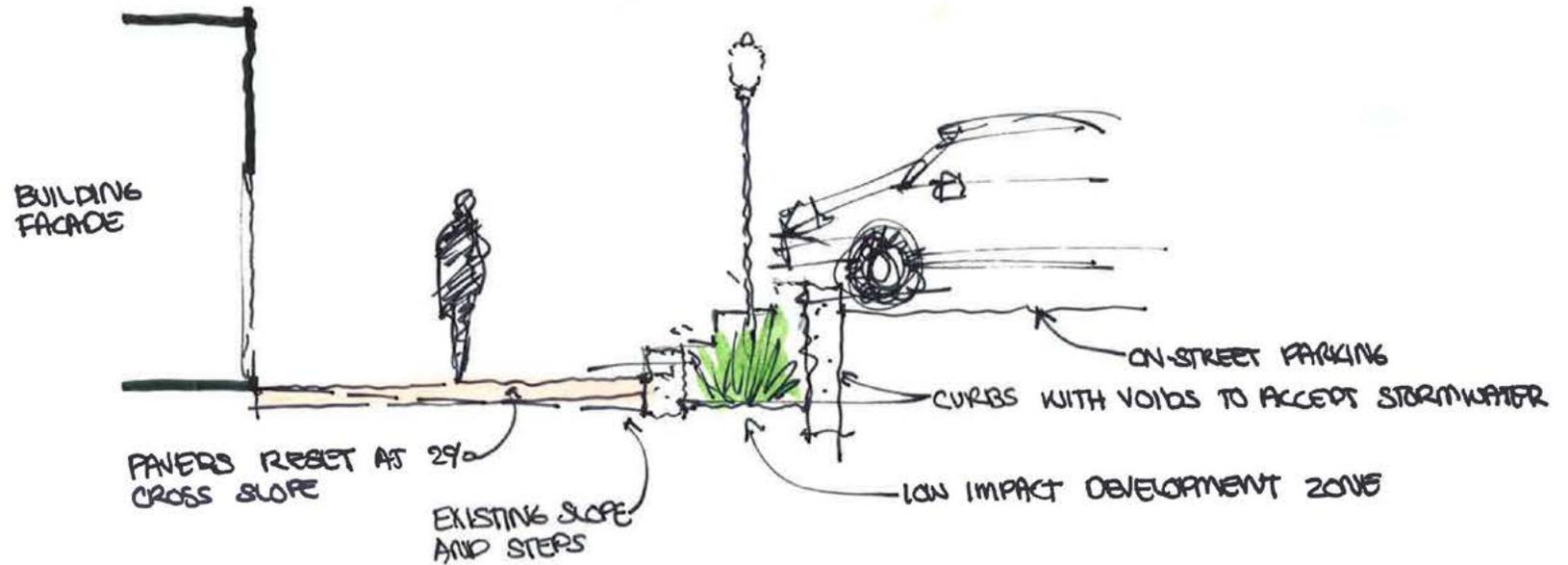
Hillsboro St Street Tree Retrofit



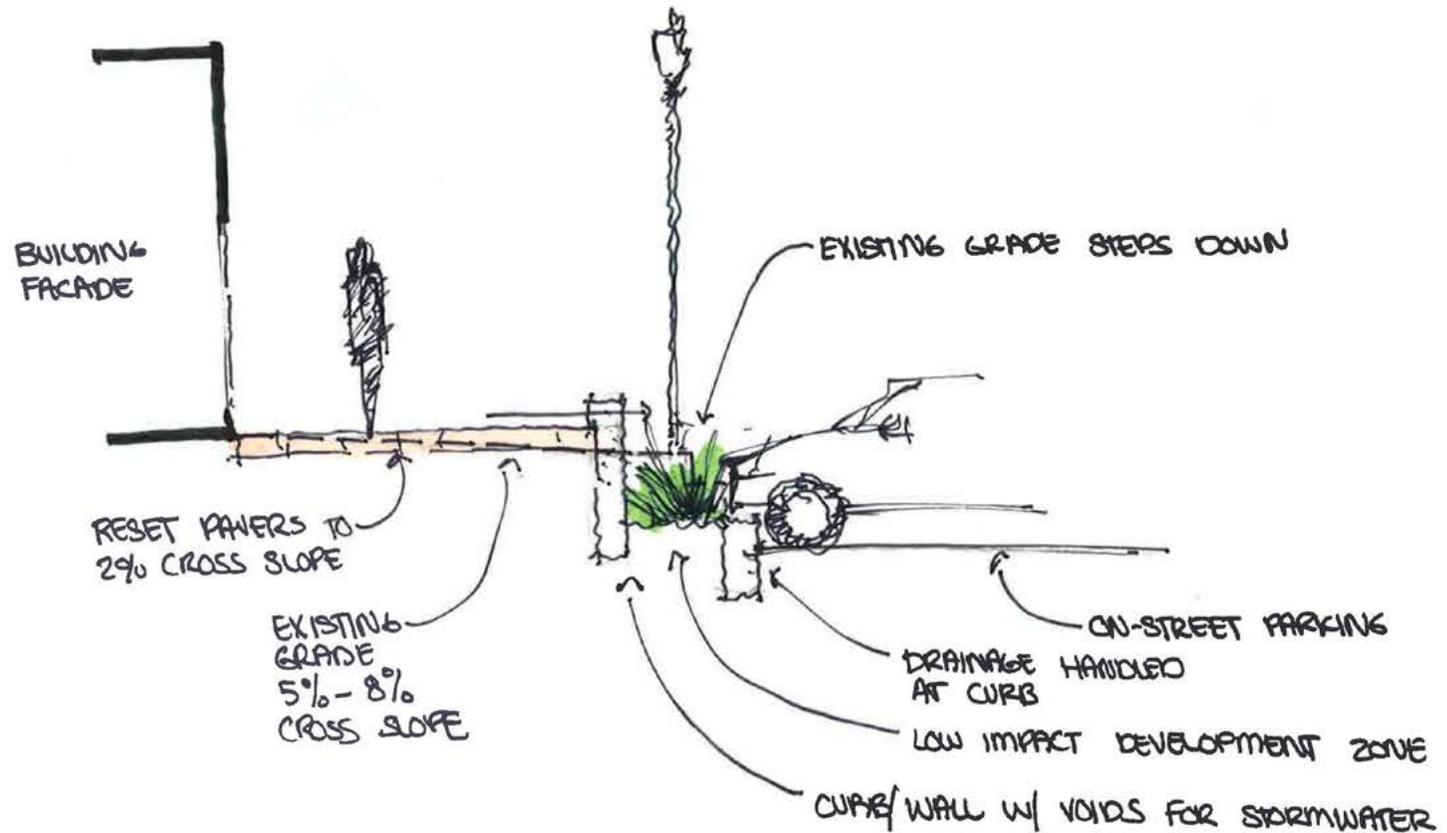
Hillsboro Streetscape Grade Transitions Condition A



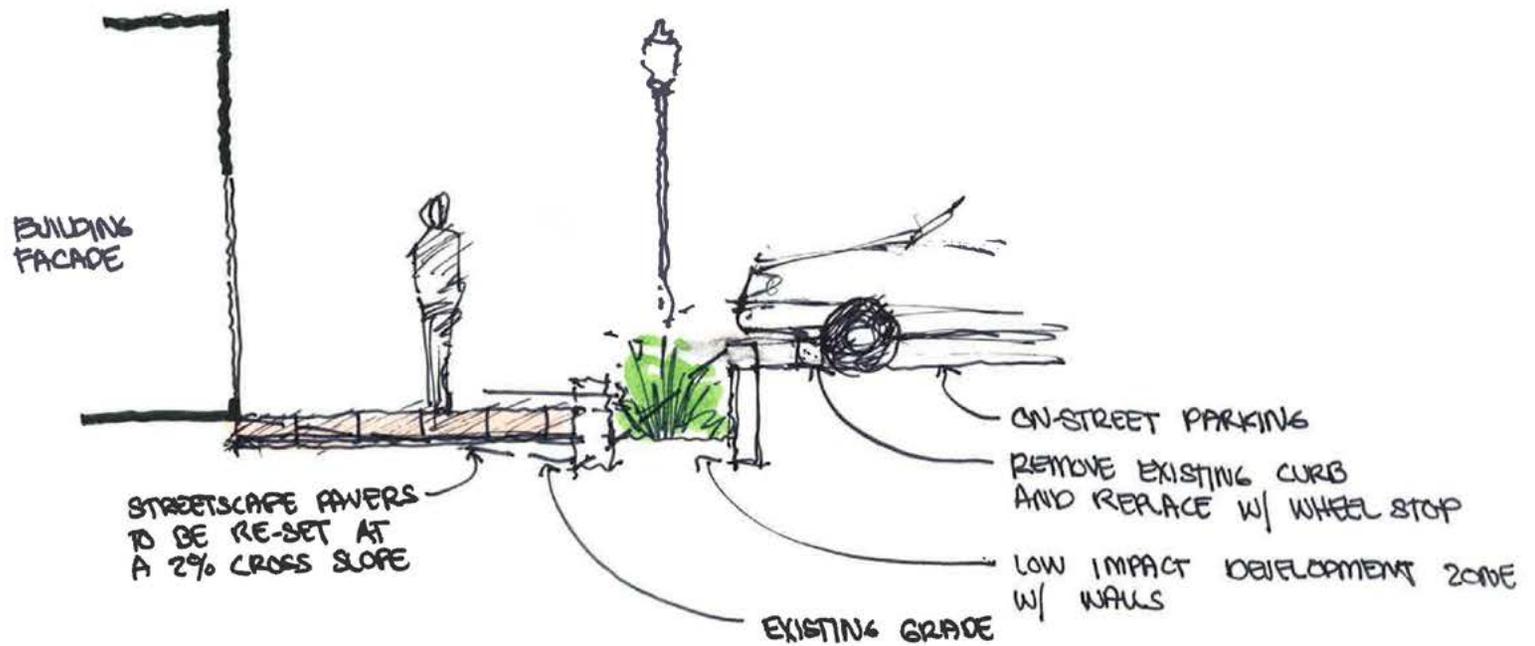
Hillsboro Streetscape Grade Transitions Condition B



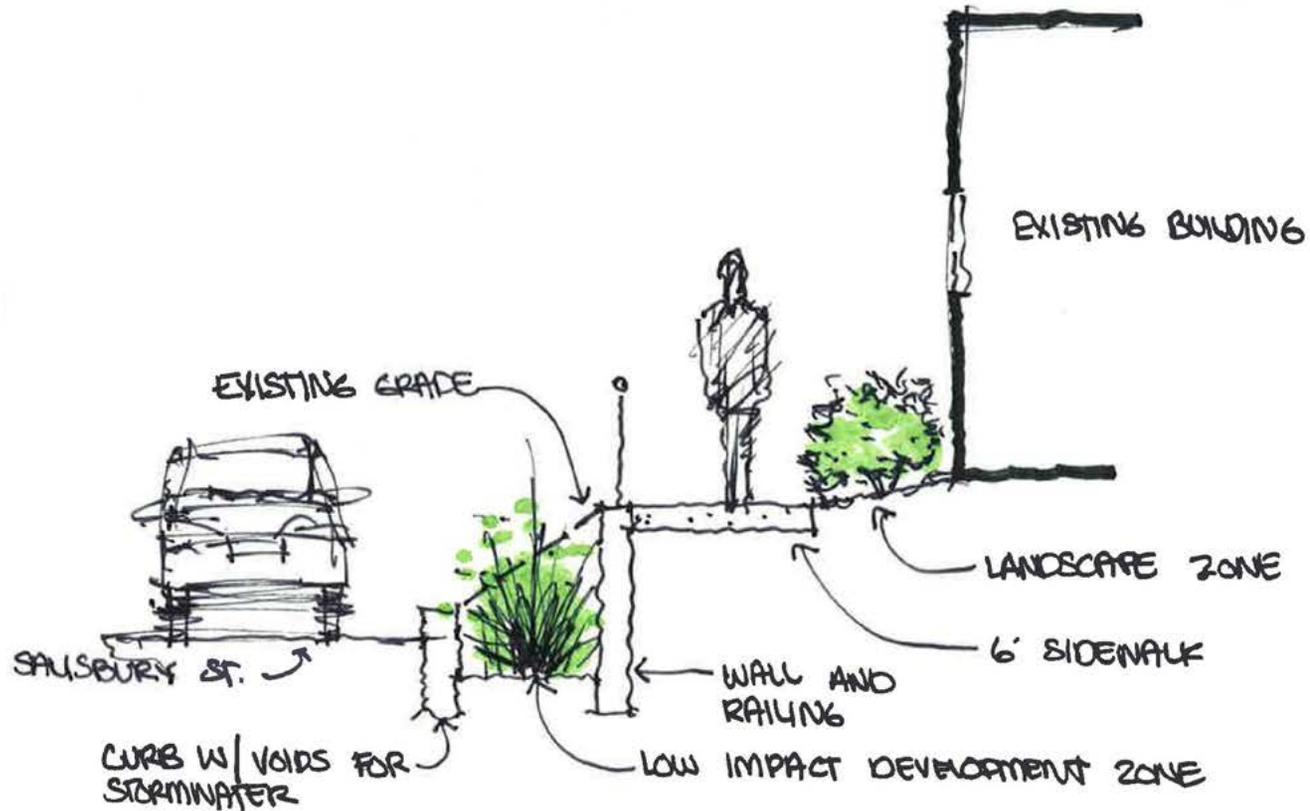
Hillsboro Streetscape Grade Transitions Condition C



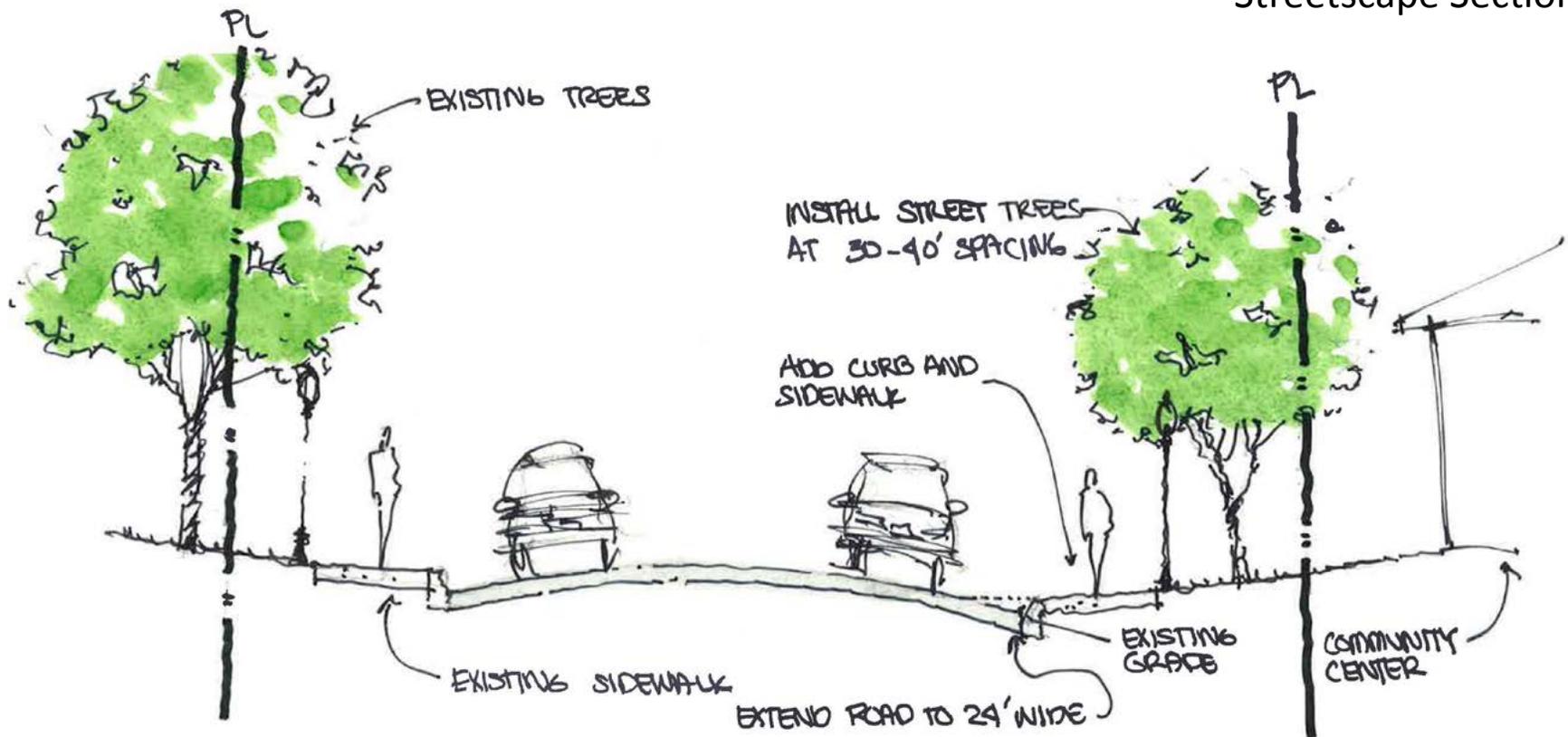
Hillsboro Streetscape Grade Transitions Condition D



Salisbury Streetscape Grade Transition



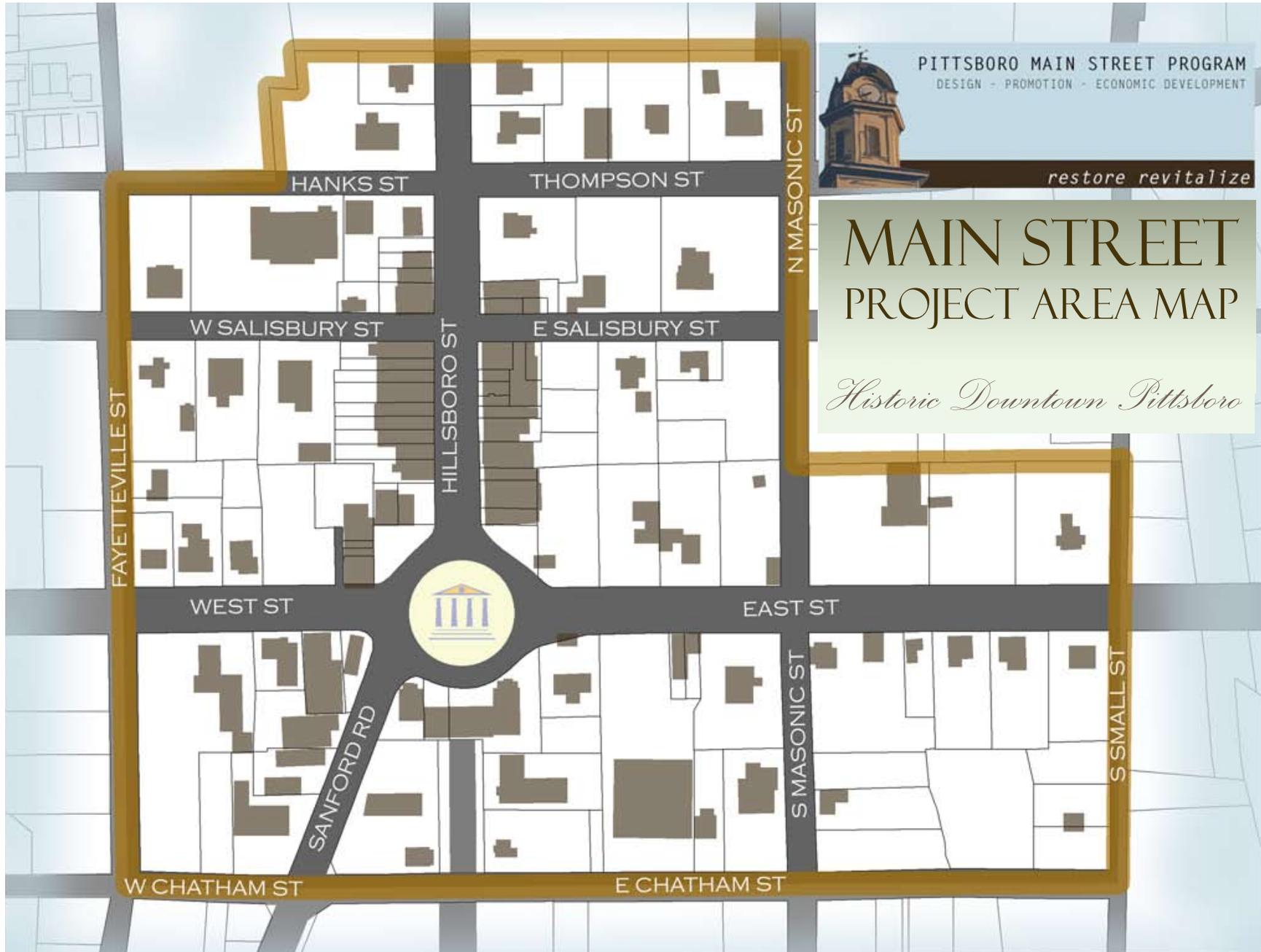
Hanks St. East of
Hillsboro St.
Streetscape Section





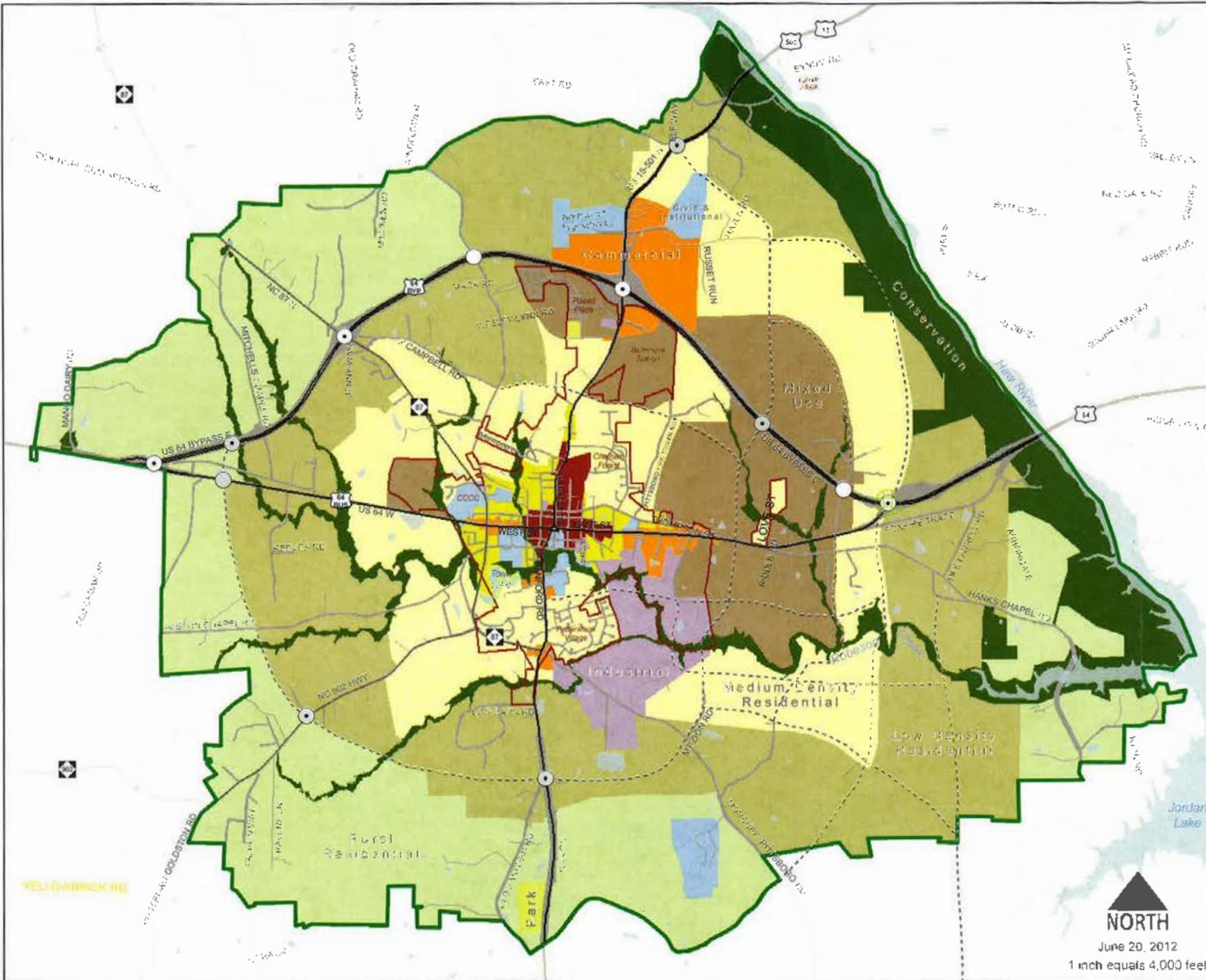
PITTSBORO DOWNTOWN VISION PLAN

Reference Plans



PITTSBORO, NC Land Use Plan

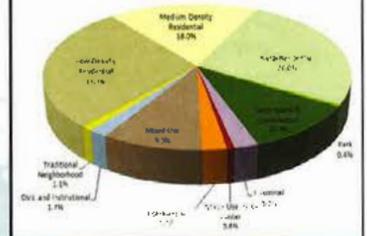
Map 9: Future Land Use



- - - Recommended New Roads
- ▭ Pittsboro I-12
- ▭ Pittsboro Corporate Limits
- Future Land Use**
- Industrial
- Mixed Use Town Center
- Commercial
- Mixed Use
- Office & Institutional
- Traditional Neighborhood
- Medium Density Residential
- Low Density Residential
- Rural Residential
- Park
- Open Space & Conservation

The Highways Map provides details on the proposed roadways.

Proposed Future Land Use by Percentage



TOWN OF PITTSBORO

Department of Planning

Proud Past
Exciting Future

NORTH
June 20, 2012
1 inch equals 4,000 feet

